Daily Report

Latin America

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Inter-American Development Bank Meets in Japan

WA0804142091

For reportage of the 23d annual Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) meeting in Nagoya, Japan, 7-9 April, including reports on speeches and remarks by Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori; Pedro Aspe Armella, the Mexican secretary of finance and public credit; and Eduardo Modiano, the Brazilian National Bank for Economic and Social Development chairman, see the International Affairs section of the 8 April and subsequent issues of the East Asia DAILY REPORT.

Cuba

Alarcon Denounces U.S. 'Campaign of Pressures'

FL1104114591 Havana Tele Rebelde Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] At the United Nations, Cuba has denounced the U.S. campaign of pressures in its attempt to present our nation as a country isolated in the world. On 10 April the 9 March GRANMA editorial concerning a UN Human Rights Commission resolution about imposing on our country an investigator who would permanently report on these civil freedoms was circulated as an official UN document. The note was sent by Cuban Ambassador to the United Nations Ricardo Alarcon to UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar, who was asked to distribute it as an official UN document.

2d PCC Provincial Committee Plenum Held

PA1104143691 Havana Tele Rebelde and Cubavision Networks in Spanish 0000 GMT 8 Apr 91

[Text] Topics associated with the food program and with the construction of installations for the Pan-American Games and tourism were discussed at the 2d PCC [Cuban Communist Party] Plenum in Santiago de Cuba today.

During the second regular plenum of the PCC provincial committee held in Santiago de Cuba, delegates said the installations for the Pan-American Games and the 4th PCC Congress will be finished by the end of the current six-month period. The effort required is a tremendous one because of the well-known difficulties in obtaining the supplies that are needed for such installations.

Those attending the meeting reviewed the current work being done and the outlook for the progress to be made in the five areas of provincial development: industry, tourism, science, culture, and education. If we bear in mind that over 70 percent of the province's production is industrial, one is able to realize its importance and that is why there are plans to develop industry even further, especially in the areas of food, sugar by-products, and others.

As for tourism, it has been noted that Santiago de Cuba is one of the richest regions with the greatest potential for increasing this important source of foreign exchange and providing a service for our workers. Because of these characteristics, work is being done to offer different facets of tourism: lodging, tours, health, diving, fishing, cruises, and conventions.

As of the end of this report, the attendees were to discuss the work being done to turn Santiago de Cuba into a cultural and educational center, which would complete the five areas of development, referred to by Commander in Chief Fidel Castro at the PCC provincial assembly held in this city last 17 February.

Ecumenical Council Demands Changes in Constitution

PA1204043091 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 1608 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] Havana, 11 Apr (NOTIMEX)—The Cuban Ecumenical Council today approved a document to be sent to the 4th Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba [PCC] which demands changes in the country's Constitution and an end to religious discrimination.

During talks between the Cuban leadership and the Ecumenical Council, Council members advocated the establishment of a lay state in Cuba and the elimination of "all references to Marxism-Leninism and its atheistic concept of the state." During the Cuban Ecumenical Council's 35th National Assembly, its president, Raul Suarez, told NOTIMEX that the rapprochement with the Cuban Government and the followers' eventually joining the PCC occur as a function of these demands.

During an interview before the worship service that served to open the National Assembly, Suarez said that the document also favors the followers' having access to the media and the chance to systematically look after prison inmates.

The rapprochement between the Protestants and the government started a year ago when Cuban President Fidel Castro publicly admitted that people of the church have been discriminated against in the revolutionary process. The Catholic Church has stayed out of the dialogue between the Cuban Government and the Protestant churches. This rapprochement has marked the preparations for the 4th PCC Congress to be held this year.

According to the Ecumenical Council president, another point proposed in the document is "to revise the church's role in promoting ethical values because every society requires criticism to achieve perfection."

Suarez said that the document also lists the leading elements of the Christian faith, underlining "recognition of the existence of a creator and the role of men as free entities."

Within the framework of the Council's national assembly, the leaders of the main churches, followers, members, and active party members will meet on Saturday to debate the followers' eventually joining the PCC.

Inter-Caribbean Affairs

Dominica Prime Minister on Regional Unity

FL1204003091 Bridgetown CANA in English 2117 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] Roseau, Dominica, April 11, CANA—Dominica Prime Minister Eugenia Charles has declared that her intentions regarding a proposed political union for four Caribbean countries are honourable and in keeping with the aim of fostering a better way of life for the islanders. Charles was responding to claims by the opposition grouping, the Standing Conference of Popular Democratic

Parties of the Eastern Caribbean (Scope), that the government leaders are for unity because it will serve their self-interest.

"I have no hidden agenda," Miss Charles said. "My agenda is that we are too small to be able to go forward—the rest of the world is showing that. And we feel if we band together we can get far more efficient service for our people at less cost per unit, leaving more money to do more things for the people of this country."

She said this had been her agenda from the beginning, and still remained her primary reason for promoting a union that will involve Dominica, Grenada, St. Lucia, and St. vincent.

"I am not going to push people into (a union)," Miss Charles said. "I will talk about it. If they are convinced they will vote for it. If they're not convinced they will vote against it—it is for the people to decide."

She complained that opposition parties were trying to undermine the unity process. "They would like it to come in their time (in government) to be modelled in their way," Miss Charles said.

Antigua and Barbuda

Opposition Calls For More Scandal Investigations

FL110413159l Bonaire Trans World Radio in English 1130 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] Antiguan and Barbudan opposition leader Baldwin Spencer and the National Council of Organization are calling on Prime Minister Vere Bird, Sr., to make additional reforms including further investigation into the Antiguan arms scandal.

Mr. Bird says reforms are already in motion, noting that the attorney general is still investigating phases of that arms scandal involving business ties to Israel. The scandal which was investigated recently is into how [as heard] Israeli weapons somehow made their way through Antigua and into the hands of Colombian drug traffickers.

Demands Bird Sr. Resignation

FL1104164091 Bridgetown CANA in English 1420 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] St John's, Antigua, April 11, CANA—Parliamentary opposition leader Baldwin Spencer has rejected charges by Prime Minister Vere Bird that he had failed to respond to a government request for suggestions on electoral reform. Bird made the charge in a letter to Governor General Sir Wilfred Jacobs. The letter, made public this week, was in response to a petition signed by the organisers of an anti-corruption march here last month.

The Antigua and Barbuda leader said Spencer had been contacted by the attorney general since 1989 for comments and suggestions concerning possible amendments to the Representation of the People Act, but he had not responded to-date. Spencer in a press release on Wednesday said he had submitted 18 proposals to the government in a letter dated June 5, 1990. A copy of the letter and the proposals were also released.

"(The prime minister's) statement is a blatant and deliberate lie, and is designed to confuse, and to take a cheap shot at the opposition," the opposition leader said.

He said after the "chaotic" 1989 general elections in which some polling stations ran out of ballot paper and an illegal extension of polling time was granted by a high court judge, his United National Democratic Party (UNDP) had written the prime minister and the governor general, "detailing proposals for electoral reforms." Spencer said since the Act to Govern the Conduct of Elections was enacted in 1975, revision was "necessary after a period of time."

Despite a tradition of free and fair elections cited by Bird in the letter, Spencer said there was "a general lack of confidence" in the electoral system because "the voting public (had)...become dissatisfied with the ease with which the electoral machinery has been manipulated by the ruling Antigua Labour Party over the years."

Meanwhile, UNDP leader, Dr. Ivor Heath, said the National Council of Organisations (NCO), under whose banner the anti-corruption demonstration was held, was not satisfied with the prime minister's response to its petition, especially on the issue of freeing up the public media.

"Public radio and television, as it is now in Antigua, is partisan, and that is what we are trying to break down," he said, noting that the parliamentary opposition leader currently has no access.

The prime minister said in his letter that it was essential to keep the state media free from partisanship, and for the use of the government. Tim Hector, leader of the Antigua-Caribbean Liberation Movement (ACLM), described the prime minister's entire response to the NCO's petition as "inane and insane," and said the ACLM would be pushing for a general strike to force the 81-year-old Vere Bird, Sr. from office.

"For the prime minister to say that the (Louis Blom-Cooper) report did not condemn the government for unbridled corruption, it is not just the prime minister telling a public lie, it is proof that the prime minister has taken leave of his senses," Hector said. Blom-Cooper investigated Antigua's link in an international arms scandal in which a batch of Israeli arms was transshipped through Antigua to Colombian drug barons.

"ACLM will be urging the public to move for the prime minister's immediate resignation, consequent upon a general strike. We have given Bird every opportunity to be reasonable," Hector added. Hector also said Agriculture Minister Hilroy Humphreys and Public Utilities Minister Robin Yearwood must either resign voluntarily, or be relieved of thier duties, before facing a public inquiry for allegedly signing unauthorised promissory notes.

The ACLM leader also rapped the prime minister's position on the function of the state media. He said the prime minister's position that the public media should be for the exclusive use of the government suggested the government intended to maintain totalitarian control over the society.

Bahamas

Sir Henry Milton Taylor Named Governor General

FL1104143291 Bridgetown CANA in English 1207 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] Nassau, Bahamas, April 11, CANA—Eighty-seven-year-old Sir Henry Milton Taylor, a founder of the ruling Progressive liberal Party (PLP), has been confirmed as governor general of the Bahamas.

The ailing Sir Henry, a former editor of HANSARD, had been acting head of state since 1988 when former governor general, 71-year-old Sir Gerald Cash, retired.

Dominican Republic

* Communist Party Attacks 1991 State Budget

91CA0090D Santo Domingo EL SIGLO in Spanish 18 Feb 91 p 3-D

[Text] In the view of the Communist Labor Party (PCT), the draft budget for 1991, submitted to the National Congress by the executive branch of the government, involves a reduction in real terms of 42.78 percent, compared to the budget for 1990.

A statement issued by the political party points out that, although the draft budget for 1991 involves an increase of 10.2505 billion Dominican pesos, or a figure 57.22 percent higher than the 1990 budget, it does not take into account the fact that the inflation rate in 1990 was 100.68 percent.

In that sense the PCT called the draft budget for 1991 "an irrational proposal which does not meet the needs of the country's social, economic, and political development."

The party stated that to equal the 1990 budget level, the draft 1991 budget, based on the assumption of halting the rate of inflation, should be increased by 2.78926 billion pesos, which would amount to a total budget of 13.040 billion pesos.

The PCT, led by Rafael Chaijub Mejia, states that the draft budget reduces investment in the productive sector in real terms, compared to the 1990 budget.

It explained that in the agricultural sector, although the budget is increased by 10.52 percent, the reality is that it has declined by about 90.16 percent.

Regarding the industrial and trade sectors, the budget has declined by 56.78 percent; education, by 39.4 percent; and public health, by 14.59 percent.

The statement points out that while these reductions were taking place in those sectors, in the services sectors of the economy, such as tourism, it has increased by 133.98 percent in nominal terms and by 71.21 percent in the armed forces sector.

The statement adds that from this short analysis it may be concluded that the government is not interested in developing the productive areas of the country, ignoring the growing food needs of the people and the crisis facing domestic industry.

The party stated that the National Congress should reject the draft budget and, in its place, should prepare another budget in accordance with the national interest and the urgent needs of the people.

At the same time it points out that a budget figure adequate to stimulate economic growth is worthless if priorities are not assigned to the productive and educational sectors.

The PCT proposes that to enact a budget oriented towards national development, the 1990 budget should be increased, not by 100 percent, but by 200 percent. This increase would make it possible to plan for 1991, if it is considered that the inflation rate in 1991 will equal the 1990 rate.

The party statement estimates that a budget based on this assumption would mean a real increase in the amount of money to be invested in the various sectors, and not simply a nominal increase.

* Prices of Market Basket Items Reported

91CA0090E Santo Domingo LISTIN DIARIO in Spanish 1 Mar 91 p 3

[Article by Arsenio Ramirez]

[Text] Plantains, onions (red and white), tomatoes, sweet potatoes, and "yautia blanca" [a white tuber] have declined in price in Santo Domingo markets, especially in the "Mercado Nuevo" [New Market] on Duarte Avenue.

Almost all of the stalls that operate in those markets have stocks of sugar (refined, semirefined, and sugar syrup), as well as chocolate and tomato paste.

The standard unit of plantains from Barahon is being sold for between 1.60 and 1.70 pesos, while those from Ciba cost 1.20 pesos. About one week ago Barahon plantains were sold for between 1.80 and 1.90 pesos. Ciba plantains sold for 1.40 to 1.50 pesos.

During a trip through the markets it was noted that the prices of yuca, yams, and "yautia amarilla" [yellow tuber] were still high.

A pound of "yautia blanca", which formerly cost 6 pesos, now sells for 4 pesos. It was reported that 16 ounces of sweet potatoes, which used to cost 2.25 pesos, now can be bought for 1.60 pesos.

Yams are being sold for 3.50 pesos, and "yautia coco" [round tuber] is being sold for 2.20 pesos. The price per

standard unit of "guineo verde" [translation unknown] is 40 centavos and for a unit of "rulo," [translation unknown] 35 centavos.

A pound of red onions is sold for between 6 and 7 pesos; a white onion sells for 4 pesos; and a pound of garlic cloves sells for between 28 and 30 pesos.

A pound of potatoes costs between 3.75 and 4 pesos, while a pound of red beans sells for 11.00 pesos.

Regarding fresh vegetables, a pound of tomatoes for salad sells for 2 pesos, although at some stalls it goes for 2.50 pesos. Beets cost 3 pesos per pound, while cabbage sells for 3.50 pesos per pound. A pound of lettuce sells for 3.25 pesos, while the standard unit of cucumbers sells for between 0.50 and 0.75 pesos.

Food stalls in the markets have stocks of different varieties of sugar. Sugar syrup sells for 2.45 pesos; semirefined sugar sells for 2.80 pesos; and refined sugar sells for 2.95 pesos.

The food stalls also sell chocolate. A bar of chocolate costs 0.65 pesos. A pound of dried codfish costs 28 pesos, while a pound of herring costs 15 pesos.

Furthermore, the food stalls have tomato paste, which is being sold for between 18 and 19 pesos.

There are stocks of fruits in the markets, especially juice oranges, sour lemons, pineapples, avocados, melons, and others.

* 1990 Sugar Exports Total $178 Million

91C10090B Santo Domingo EL SIGLO in Spanish 19 Feb 91 p 2

[Article by Elina Maria Cruz]

[Text] In 1990 the sugar industry brought into the country about $178 million in foreign exchange, which was $18 million more than the income generated in 1989.

Jimmy Garcia, director of the National Sugar Institute [INAZUCAR], provided this data and pointed out that in 1991 the sugar income figure will be higher, due to the increase approved in the Dominican quota in the North American preferential sugar market.

In specific figures the income obtained by the sale of sugar in the North American and world market amounted to $177,905,430.

In 1989 sugar exports amounted to $162,210,231. Other sugarcane products, including molasses and "furfural" [a sugar by-product], brought in $9,729,042 and $16,471,778, respectively, according to figures provided by INAZUCAR.

Garcia indicated that in 1991 the income generated by the sugar industry could be higher, due to the increase in the Dominican quota approved at the end of 1990 by the North American authorities.

The Dominican sugar import quota on the North American market is presently 358,010 tons. Until the beginning of December 1990, when United States agricultural authorities approved an increase of 66,000 tons in the quota, Dominican sugar sales to the United States amounted to 292,010 tons.

The increase, approved for U.S. fiscal year 1990-91, represents additional income of $16.5 million for the Dominican Republic.

In emphasizing the economic upturn recorded over the past few months by the sugar industry, due to the increase approved by the United States in the import quota, Garcia recalled that this is a fortuitous change, principally caused by the frosts which affected the production of sugar beets and increases in production costs of other sweeteners derived from corn and also from sugarcane.

He brought to the attention of the meeting North American figures which predicted that there would be no sugar imports in 1990.

He pointed out: "Fortunately for us, this was not possible, and what has occurred is a constant increase in sugar imports. However, we cannot provide any assurance that this situation will go on forever."

He indicated that, although in 1990 the State Sugar Council (CEA) had to sell the 1991 sugar harvest in advance, due to its financial requirements, those resources were channeled through the Central Bank.

He also discussed the situation affecting domestic consumption of sugar.

Garcia stated that the country will have no problem in meeting its commitments for the sale of raw sugar in 1991. However, he left open the possibility that there may be problems with the supply of refined sugar.

The official did not reject the possibility that, by the end of 1991, the country may have to import some of the refined sugar needed to meet domestic demand.

According to Garcia, the importation of sugar in 1991, following two other import transactions which took place in 1990, would result from the fact that domestic production of refined sugar is less than the demand.

In his view, after the most recent increase in sugar prices on the domestic market, the trade in sugar with Haiti will lack incentives. For the most part he attributed the sugar trade with Haiti to a shortage in that country.

Garcia indicated that, although many details are not available on the domestic consumption of sugar, it has been demonstrated, particularly since the sugar crisis in 1990, that there has been a major increase in the demand for sugar, particularly on the part of the industrial sector which for some time has operated factories in the various free trade zones making a variety of candy for export.

In commenting on this situation the official announced the interest of the Japanese Government in financing the installation of a sugar refinery on a state-owned sugar plantation. He said that consideration has been given, in principle, to the Consuelo Sugar Mill, which has a refining plant.

Nevertheless, the prospects for that investment reportedly are subject to the agreements which the Dominican Republic has entered into to meet its international financial commitments.

He also pointed to the intention of the Romana Sugar Mill to increase its production of refined sugar through the expansion of existing installations.

At the same time he stated that MG and Associates, a Dominican firm, will make a study of the domestic consumption of sugar. The study will be financed by the Group of Latin American and Caribbean Sugar Exporting Countries (GEPLACEA). The study will determine, among other aspects, the quantity of sugar consumed by the industrial and domestic sectors, the comparative consumption of the different kinds of sugar, and projections for consumption over the next 10 years.

* Health Care Costs Increase by 300 Percent

91C 00090F Santo Domingo EL SIGLO in Spanish 4 Mar 91 p 2

[Article by Tony Perez]

[Text] The high costs recorded over the past three years for care in private clinics have led patients to ask their doctors to reduce the number of days they stay there to make it possible to balance their budgets.

Over the past three years health care costs have gone up by between 200 and 300 percent, according to the results of a study carried out by Maria Jerez, administrator of the Clinica Abreu [Abreu Clinic]. She attributes the noticeable change in patient costs to inflation.

Jerez took a sample of 50 persons who entered the Clinica Abreu in January 1988 and compared the costs of their stays with those of 50 patients admitted in December 1990. The study does not include the cost of medical fees, which are usually high.

The study points out that the 50 patients admitted to the clinic in 1988 had total costs of 51,397.63 pesos, for an average of 1,027.95 per person. This total increased to 172,157 pesos for the 1990 group, with an average expenditure of 3,443.44 per person, an increase of 203 percent.

In the category of medication, the 1988 group spent 17,314 pesos, for an average of 346 pesos per patient, while the 1990 group spent 64,998 pesos, an average of 1,300 pesos per patient. This represents an increase of 367 percent.

The cost of rooms for the 1988 group was 13,821 pesos, for an average of 276 pesos per person. The 1990 group spent 50,600 pesos for their rooms or 1,012 pesos per person, an increase of 367 percent.

The 50 patients in 1988 spent 7,666 pesos on diagnostic tests (153.32 pesos per person), while the 1990 group spent 15,529 pesos, that is, 310.58 per person, an increase of 203 percent.

Clinica Abreu, the study showed that a room costs at the Clinica Abreu ran between 35 and 200 pesos per day in 1988, while the same room cost 250 to 900 pesos per day in 1990.

In 1988 charges for the use of the operating room were between 200 and 250 pesos, while these costs had risen in 1990 to between 500 and 600 pesos.

A room in the intensive care unit cost 250 pesos per day in 1988, while it cost 1,200 pesos per day in 1990.

Regarding medications, a gram of Cefalosporin, an antibiotic, cost patients 24.50 pesos in 1988. Nevertheless, the 1990 patient needing the same medication had to pay 93.55 pesos.

A blood test cost the 1988 patients 8 pesos, while in 1990 it cost 35 pesos.

The cost of a routine urinalysis increased from five pesos in 1988 to 25 pesos in 1990. A chest X ray went up from 100 pesos in 1988 to 210 in 1990. A tank of oxygen increased in cost from 31 pesos in 1988 to 300 pesos in 1990.

Maria Jerez, who presented her study at the annual dinner of the magazine, ACTA MEDICA DOMINICANA [Dominican Medical Proceedings], which was held on 22 February, states that the increase in costs has forced patients to find other ways of handling them, such as asking for a reduction in the length of stay in the clinic.

For example, the 50 patients from January 1988 spent 162 days at the clinic, for an average stay of 3.24 days per patient. However, the 50 patients from January 1990 only stayed a total of 128 days, or an average of 2.56 days per patient.

* Falconbridge Exports 67 Million Tons of Nickel

91C 00090C Santo Domingo LISTIN DIARIO in Spanish 5 Mar 91 p 1-D

[Article by Carmen Carvajal]

[Text] During 1990 the Dominican Falconbridge Mining Company paid $73,492,953 in taxes to the Dominican Government.

According to information in the most recent issue of EL PUENTE HALCON [Falconbridge], the company's publication, during the final quarter of 1990 the mining company paid $13.1 million to the state alone.

Deliveries of minerals from October to December 1990 suggest a fall in payments by the company to the state, compared to previous quarters.

From January to September 1990 Falconbridge paid the state approximately $60.4 million, for a quarterly average of more than $20 million.

Apparently, during the month of December 1990 sales by the company declined, since a loss of $3.7 million was reported.

During all of 1990 the company reported profits of $32,354,866, more than 60 percent less than those for 1989, when they amounted to about $97.3 million.

Export shipments of nickel during 1990 amounted to 67.4 million tons, or more than 1989 shipments, which totalled 63.3 million tons.

* Improved Treatment of Haitian Sugar Workers

91C10090H Santo Domingo EL SIGLO in Spanish 16 Feb 91 p 7

[Excerpt] The secretary general of the National Sugar Federation (Fenazucar) stated on 15 February that cases of illegal recruiting, forced labor, and repression in the sugar mills "have been disappearing," due to the efforts made by the authorities of the State Sugar Council (CEA).

Secretary General Antonio Florian said at the same time that statements made on the alleged, slave-type treatment which the Haitians receive in the Dominican Republic are not true.

The trade union leader made these statements in the course of a speech opening the Sixth National Congress of Fenazucar, attended by sugar trade union leaders from the area.

Florian said that, in addition to being the result of his own efforts, the work of the CEA to improve the situation of the Haitian workers was also the result of the internal and external pressure to which they have been subjected.

However, he stated that living and working conditions in the sugar mills "are bad for all of those who work on the plantations, both Dominicans as well as Haitians."

He went on to raise the need to humanize working conditions in the sugar mills and to implement gradually plans for the mechanization and Dominicanization of the planting, growing, cutting, and processing of sugarcane. [passage omitted]

* Ambassador Describes Mistreatment of Haitians

91C10090I Santo Domingo EL NACIONAL in Spanish 17 Feb 91 p 21

[Article by Bolivar Antonio Veras]

[Text] Sabana Grande de Boya—Albert Chassagne, Haitian ambassador to the Dominican Republic, has revealed that he has reports that Haitians continue to be mistreated in Dominican sugar mills.

He stated that according to his information in many cane growing areas rural guards extort money from the Haitians and then arrest them.

The Haitian ambassador said that he has received many complaints of this kind, regarding the mistreatment to which his compatriots are subjected.

Chassagne said that in the same area Haitian leaders, including laborers, approached him to complain that they have been mistreated by some rural guards who extorted money from them and often arrested them.

The Haitian diplomat spoke with newspaper reporters on 16 February after the inauguration of a medical center built at a cost of 1.5 million Dominican pesos, with contributions from a German organization and from the Good Samaritans, a religious institution.

Leading civilian, military, and police authorities from Sabana Grande de Boya and from Monte Plata, in Monte Plata Province, attended the ceremony inaugurating the center.

Ambassador Chassagne said that he was pleased with the establishment of the medical center, which will provide medical care to his compatriots engaged in cutting cane at sugar mills in this city, as well as to Dominican citizens.

A resolution passed by the local city administration declared the Haitian ambassador a distinguished guest of the city.

Ambassador Chassagne said that he hopes that the government will keep its promise to stop the mistreatment to which he is sure that Haitian workers engaged in cutting sugarcane and in other agricultural activities in the country are subjected.

Nevertheless, he said that he has reports that the situation has improved in many areas, although mistreatment continues in others.

* Armed Forces Deny Trafficking in Haitians

91C10090G Santo Domingo EL SIGLO in Spanish 4 Mar 91 p 2

[Text] The secretariat of the Armed Forces has denied that members of the Dominican military establishment are participating in the illegal contracting for and trafficking in Haitian workers, as was stated on 1 March by Jose Francisco Pena Gomez, president of the Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD).

Although the statements made by Pena Gomez during a meeting held at the Dominican Concorde Hotel were published by several newspapers, the secretariat only mentioned the version of his remarks published by this newspaper in the denial which it issued.

The secretariat pointed out that the purpose of its statement was "to deny emphatically the report which appeared in the newspaper EL SIGLO on page 8 of its edition of 2 March under the headline, 'Report That Illegal Contracting Is Continuing.' The article reports statements allegedly made by Dr. Jose Francisco Pena Gomez."

According to what was said by the president of the PRD, when he returned from Haiti after attending the inauguration of President Jean Bertrand Aristide, on the border he saw three trucks filled with sacks near beds which transported Haitians under military guard, including women and children.

EL SIGLO has a tape recording of the statements made by Pena Gomez in which he states that he was with Dr. Hugo Tolentino Dipp when he saw the illegal trafficking activity.

The Armed Forces secretariat states that its desire to deny what was said in EL SIGLO was due to the fact that "the military authorities have received specific orders from the commander in chief of the armed forces and of the National Police to have nothing to do with anything concerning the contracting of Haitian workers."

At the same time the secretariat of the Armed Forces stated that the newspaper report was "made with an evil intention, was without foundation, and was prepared on the spur of the moment, since several days have gone by between the date on which Pena Gomez referred to the alleged incident and the date on which the information was published."

Haiti

U.S. Embassy Statement Termed 'Interference'

FL1104202591 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1200 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Port-au-Prince on 10 April]

[Text] The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has issued a statement after the U.S. Embassy provided its opinion on the arrest of Mrs. Trouillot.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs states that after the government commissioner to the Port-au-Prince First Instance Civil Court decided to take into custody the former provisional president of the country, Mrs. Ertha Pascal-Trouillot, in relation to the investigation of the failed coup by Roger Lafontant on the night of 6-7 January, the U.S. Embassy issued a press release in which it spoke of its surprise over the arrest of Mrs. Trouillot.

In this release, the embassy appealed to the country's government to treat Mrs. Trouillot in compliance with the international principles related to human rights and within the scope of respect for legal procedures. The embassy particularly expressed a wish that an end be put to this matter as soon as possible.

The government of the country takes advantage of this statement to reply to the declaration of the U.S. Embassy by reminding the embassy that the government has firmly committed itself to respect the basic rights of each Haitian in compliance with the country's law, the country's Constitution, and international laws. However, the implementation of the democratic norms exactly commands [as heard] that no Haitian can be above the law. All Haitians must be within the law. Consequently, Mrs. Ertha Pascal-Trouillot, a Haitian citizen, is someone who can appear before the court like anyone else, like any Haitian. She must also enjoy all legal guarantees.

The government of the Republic advises that the separation of the powers—executive power, legislative power, and judicial power—is a basic principle in the Constitution of the country. The judicial power must maintain complete independence opposite the executive power and the legislative power. Any and all that constitute an obstacle to the independence of each of the powers must be condemned.

Finally, the government of the Republic keenly hopes that in the future the U.S. Embassy will avoid such interventions that can be easily interpreted as a kind of interference in Haitian business.

KOSA Reacts to Statement

FL1104220091 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1100 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] The Committee of Solidarity with Haiti, KOSA [Komite Solidarite Avek Ayiti], advises that it is offended to hear of the communique issued by the U.S. Embassy in Haiti regarding the arrest of former provisional President Mrs. Ertha Pascal-Trouillot.

We in KOSA think that this communique is direct interference in Haitian internal matters. That is to say, it is a blow to the Haitian people's national dignity. We cannot believe that the U.S. Embassy does not know diplomatic proprieties.

According to KOSA there is an obvious provocation behind this communique. The history of Central America and the Caribbean clearly shows that the U.S. Government never has close relations with any staunch national government in the area. As time goes by, the U.S. ambassador's behavior will become more arrogant. That is a way to bring trouble to the avalanche government. Then there will be a pretext to justify all kinds of dishonest acts. If you pick at a pimple, it will become an infected sore.

The KOSA asks all Haitian patriots to remain alert. We must keep pointing an accusing finger and denouncing the hypocritical and equivocal behavior of a number of people who do not agree with what is happening in Haiti.

A Haitian proverb states: When the cat knows, the rat knows [Men chat konnen, rat konnen; meaning both the hunter and the prey know what is going on]. We must not let ourselves be caught in a trap or be provoked.

Signed: Raymond L. Justin, secretary general of KOSA, which is based abroad.

Minister of Information Halts Police-Mob Violence

FL1104122791 Bonaire Trans World Radio in English 1130 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] Haitian police clashed with a group of men yesterday in a poor section of the capital, Port-au-Prince. It began when a soldier fired a shot during an argument.

Later, a group of men retaliated by attacking the neighborhood's police barracks, destroying furniture. Police then turned on the mob. One person was wounded by a bullet, and several others hurt by rocks and police night sticks before the disturbance was finally halted by the arrival of the minister of information.

Police Station Ransacked

FL1104213091 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1100 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Excerpt] Early yesterday afternoon, one person was hospitalized after being shot and a police station was ransacked because of the Bel-Air area population's anger. This all happened after a military man intervened in a conflict between a civilian and a relative of his. Peace was restored yesterday afternoon after the government sent Information Minister Marie Laurence Jocelyn Lassegue to calm the people in the area. It was thanks to the minister who intervened with great tact, together with the military who kept its self control, that the situation did not deteriorate. At present calm has returned to Bel-Air. [passage omitted]

Commerce Minister Views High Cost of Living

FL1004213091 Port-au-Prince Radio Antilles Internationales in French 1145 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Interview with Commerce Minister Smarck Michel by unidentified reporter; place and date not given—portions recorded; italicized passages in Creole]

[Text] Minister Smarck Michel has denied the information alleging that the price of essential staple items has not been lowered. He explained that he had noticed an improvement in conforming to the prices of rice, sugar, and cement as sought by the Commerce Ministry. Minister Michel explained that a task force will be established to control prices. Let us listen to Commerce Minister Smarck Michel.

[Begin recording] [Minister Michel] *The Commerce Ministry's communique on lowering the prices of rice, sugar, and cement has been observed in several places. It has been particularly observed in the case of two products. There is, however, a third one [stammers] like rice that.... [changes thought] According to what we have heard, it has not been observed everywhere, but there is also a large shortage. We think that between now and next week this shortage problem will be solved because many goods are scheduled to arrive.*

[Reporter] *What is the cause of this shortage?*

[Minister Michel] *When we revoked the importation licenses the smugglers did not know under what kind of situation the thing [as heard] would be restored. So they did not try to import goods. Because it is the smuggler who has the biggest part of the imports there was a lapse in imports.*

[Reporter] *You told me that the fall.... [changes thought] There are two goods out of three regarding which a lowering in price has been respected. According to the information we have received, however, that is not true at all. We have been told that the goods are more expensive.*

[Minister Michel] *Our information is not the same because the sugar price has been respected and the cement price.... [changes thought] I was reading in the newspapers this morning that the cement price is more or less respected and that rice is in short supply and is difficult to find. Therefore, our information is not the same.*

[Reporter] *Are there measures that you intend to take against people who do not respect this matter?*

[Minister Michel] *Certainly. There will be a task , rce that will work on that. We will look into the question.* [end recording]

Unions, Industry, Ministry Debate Minimum Wage

FL1104184591 Port-au-Prince Radio Nationale in Creole 1300 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Excepts] Subsequent to the meeting held at the Christopher Hotel in Bourdon, employers, trade unions, and the Ministry of Social Affairs are meeting again for 15 days to discuss the minimum wage.

Now it is a matter of technical committees from the three sectors attempting to resolve the question concretely. Will the law voted by the Chamber of Senators, increasing the minimum wage to 28.5 gourdes [$5.7], be maintained? Nobody knows yet. According to Marc Elie Blanc, representative of the General Central [union] of Haitian Workers [CGT], the initial work unfolded according to schedule.

Louis Noel of the Autonomous Central [union] of Haitian Workers [CATH] asserted that they are attempting to establish the difference between minimum wage and the cost of living, and he added that they can provisionally establish as the minimum salary the amount for which the senators voted.

Raymond Lafontant, Jr., representative for the employers, discussed industrial costs and products being sold on both the national and international markets. [passage omitted]

This is the information discussed so far by employers, unions, and the Ministry of Social Affairs on the question of the minimum wage. A resolution is to be made within 15 days. We await the outcome of the work of the three sectors.

Modelh/PRDH Leader Latortue Future in Question

FL1004203091 Port-au-Prince Radio Nationale in Creole 1300 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Text] A press release issued by the Democratic Movement for the Liberation of Haiti/Democratic Revolutionary Party of Haiti [Modelh/PRDH] advises us of a decision made at a meeting held recently not to work anymore with the PRDH former president, lawyer Francois Latortue. This decision was made based on the leader's behavior at a meeting held on 24 March, when lawyer Latortue arrived escorted by several military men. According to Latortue, the military men accompanied him to protect him against the founding members who wanted to dismiss him as party head. Nevertheless, the real reason, according to Modelh/PRDH headquarters, is because Latortue wanted to impose his own way of thinking and disband the party.

The signatories of this press release advise that Francois Latortue does not follow the party line established by the founder of Modelh/PRDH, Louis Eugene Athis. They further state that the 0.92 percent votes won by lawyer

Latortue in the 16 December election is not to the honor of the party. The results degrade the party.

The members conclude by stating that they will continue to restructure the Modelh/PRDH in order to free the Haitian people and to promote democracy in the country. The members call on the delegates in the nine geographical departments to support their decision not to work with lawyer Latortue as president of the Modelh/PRDH.

Netherlands Antilles

Islanders To Vote in Council Elections 12 Apr

FL1204000591 Bridgetown CANA in English 2053 GMT 11 Apr 91

[By Erasmus Williams]

[Text] Philipsburg, St. Maarten, April 11, CANA—Hectic last minute house to house campaigning was taking place Thursday throughout the Dutch Windward Islands of St. Maarten, Saba, and St. Eustatius ahead of their respective island council elections on Friday. By law, campaigning ended Wednesday night and no campaigning in the form of public meetings, radio and television ads is allowed 24 hours before the poll.

On St. Maarten 79 candidates are competing for the nine seats in the island council. On Saba parties are fielding 18 candidates for the five seats.

On St. Maarten, the elections find the ruling Democratic Party (DC) of Dr. Claude Wathey rocked by defections and charges of wrong-doing in connection with the Princess Juliana Airport expansion project. Three top DC officials—Senator Millicent Dee Weever; commissioner of constitutional and general affairs, Dennis Pantophlet; and former deputy prime minister and minister of communications and transport, Louis Crastell Gumbs—have resigned and are running on the slate of the newly formed opposition People Democratic Party (PDP), of businessman Leroy Dee Weever. Pantophlet said he will resign from the government on April 13, one day after the elections.

The leader of the DP, Dr. Claude Wathey has accused the new airport board of launching a judicial inquiry into the operations of the past board headed by Wathey's son Al, in March to "effect my position of being elected again." This charge has been rejected by the present board chairman Clarence Richardson.

Drugs, the environment, tourism, and economic development were some of the campaign issues. The ruling party has admitted "making mistakes" and requested another term of office to correct them. The official opposition St. Maarten Patriotic Alliance (SPA) of businessman Vance James Jr. has called for change, promising better government. Richardson Gibson's National Reformation Party (NRP) has called for reform, saying: "Let's clean up the mess."

The ruling Democratic Party holds seven of the nine seats in the outgoing Parliament. The St. Maarten Patriotic Alliance hold the other two. Political observers say the election is a race in which none of the eight parties will win an absolute majority and a coalition government is expected between two or even three parties.

St. Maarten census officer Alberto Mathew said 12,299 voters are registered for the St. Maarten Island Council elections, 837 more than in March 16, 1990 federal elections for the three seats in the federal Parliament in Curacao.

The 13 polling stations will open at 8 am and close at 7 pm with counting starting there immediately after. Each voter will have to choose one of the 79 candidates named by the record eight parties. The ruling Democratic Party has presented a slate of 14 candidates and legislative opposition, SPA, 17 persons to contest the polls.

St. Kitts and Nevis

Simmonds Signs Political Accord With Venezuela

FL1104192091 Bridgetown CANA in English 1829 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] Basseterre, St. Kitts, April 11, CANA—St. Kitts-Nevis Prime Minister Dr. Kennedy Simmonds has returned home after a three-day state visit to Venezuela, during which he signed an agreement establishing a commission for political cooperation between the two countries. A government information office release described the agreement as the major event of a "highly successful" visit. Under the agreement, officials of St. Kitts-Nevis and Venezuela will meet twice each year to develop a permanent forum for addressing issues of interest to both countries.

Simmonds and Venezuelan President Carlos Andres Perez issued a joint communique at the end of the visit, calling for continued dialogue between the two countries on economic issues. While in Venezuela, Simmonds was awarded the Order of the Liberator, the country's highest civilian honour for his continued support of democracy. The prime minister held a series of meetings with private and public sector representatives from the trade, investment, energy, and export sectors and toured major cultural, historical, and artistic sites.

Simmonds headed a six-member delegation which included ambassador at large Dr. William Herbert, an official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and his press secretary.

PRT Forms New Political Group With Unions

PA1004030691 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 0335 GMT 8 Apr 91

[Text] Mexico City, 7 Apr (NOTIMEX)—The Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT) reported today that it has formed the Independent Democratic Alliance [Alianza Democratica Independiente] (ADI) to engage in politics and participate in the upcoming elections.

The PRT stated in a communique that the formation of the ADI resulted from the union of several people's movement organizations that have now decided to enter politics as a political organization. Among the organizations that are supporting this new group are the Coordinating Board of Tlatelolco RoofTop Dwellers (CCAT) as well as the Union of Rooftop Dwellers and Tenants of Mexico City and the State of Mexico.

The leaders of the ADI are Antonio Garcia, Pablos Munoz, and Andres Garcia, who also led the movement of the homeless from the 1985 earthquakes.

After the creation of the political group, ADI supporters marched from Tlatelolco to the Government Secretariat accompanied by PRT leader Edgard Sanchez Ramires.

* Influence of Baja California Ex-Governor Noted

91CA0091A Tijuana ZETA in Spanish 22-28 Feb 91 pp 20A-21A

["Double Truck" column by J. Jesus Blancornelas]

[Text] According to the facts that will be examined in this commentary, Roberto de la Madrid Romandia has made the Baja California PRI [Institutional Revolutionary Party] his personal property.

Although he was not characterized by intelligence and discretion when he misgoverned us, this man has turned out to be so surprisingly skillful that he now unquestionably enjoys greater power and authority in Baja California than Luis Donaldo Colosio himself, the national leader of PRI.

We could rightly say, without overstepping the bounds of what is reasonable, that no other former governor has had the power that "Bob" has now.

Cold-shouldered by Xicotencatl Leyva Mortera, De la Madrid Romandia practically vanished into political exile, thus deflating his boasts of power in the days of Lopez-Portillo.

But when Xicotencatl fell, Oscar Baylon Chacon began to give him some play, thus enabling him to show his face and, along with the interim governor, to make life miserable for Leyva Mortera, whom they both hated.

Thus, "Bob" began to be seen in political circles and pushed as hard as he could to make his protege Gustavo Almaraz the candidate for governor of the state.

Along the road to this objective "Bob" committed the sin that marked him during his administration: frivolity. He led everyone to believe that Almaraz was a friend of the president, and it backfired on him. And he was a braggart too, not denying that he started the movement to make Rene Trevino his other choice for governor.

This is why "Bob" was summoned to the National Palace to hear from Carlos Salinas himself who had been chosen as the gubernatorial candidate.

Then came the PRI defeat. The mass exodus. The PRI building reeked of death, and no one wanted to approach it. The national leadership inexplicably let time pass before attempting a rescue. In fact, it left the field wide open, and it was then that the former governor, aided by Alejandro Rosas Romandia and Senator Gustavo Almaraz, began to maneuver more intelligently in what could be called "Project Bob."

At the same time, De la Madrid began to extend his freckled hand into the Ruffo administration and into PRI.

Jauregui, a key man, was ensconced in SAHOPE (Secretariat for State Housing and Public Works) with the suspicious acquiescence of the architect Victor Hermosillo.

Jauregui had worked in Gustavo Almaraz' campaign, and then came the "coincidence" that Jose Luis Anaya, another attorney who is an acknowledged Roberto de la Madrid man, joined Ruffo's team as head of CORETTE (Commission for the Regularization of Landholdings) and is now part of "Project Bob" to fill the post of university rector.

And although it was because of his own merits, not Roberto's power, Eduardo Krauss Coronel took over the State Attorney General's Office, in which the former governor has influence through Alejandro Rosas Romandia.

The political web kept on growing. "Bob" was delighted to see the PRI state presidency go to his protege Rene Trevino Arredondo, who is now being pushed as a senatorial candidate; working under him, among others, is Manuel Trasvina, one of the leaders of the bureaucracy who is already being proclaimed as a surefire candidate for deputy.

But "Bob" achieved something more through Rene Trevino: Hector Lutteroth, another of his men, became municipal PRI leader, even though subsequently he has not fit into this shady "Project Bob."

Even without Lutteroth, the Roberto movement won another spot: Francisco Dominguez as head of the Tijuana PRI through "Bob's" die-hard supporters Roberto Luevano Aguayo and Salvador "Chavoy" Aguirre, his accomplices in labor-union schemes. Or to put it more directly, his CTM [Confederation of Mexican Workers] domain.

This is why they won the PRI municipal elections in Tijuana. It has now come out that the De la Madrid people openly pressured Juan Pablo Calderon to withdraw from the race. Such pressure is no longer a secret, as it was also applied to Fernando Castro Trenfi, an attorney whom "Bob's" men identified as Calderon's promoter.

The move for political control continued, as Roberto's sphere of power expanded strikingly. Jose Luis Hernandez Silerio, an agent of the public prosecutor when Rosas Romandia was attorney general, served them wonderfully, indeed superbly well in becoming the leader of UNE [National Union of Former CNOP Members], the group that used to be the famous CNOP [National Confederation of Popular Organizations].

There is still more:

Last Sunday, Hugo Castro Bojorquez became the new municipal leader of PRI in Mexicali. The goal is make him state party president, the assumption in "Bob's" plans being that Rene Trevino will be running for senator.

We should recall that Castro Bojorquez was one of Roberto's many battering rams to ruin the campaign of General Hermenegildo Cuenca Diaz. This movement was obviously headed by "Bob."

Castro Bojorquez had established relations with Roberto when the latter was in CEPES [Center for Political, Economic, and Social Studies]. It was around 1973 that he first set foot in PRI after his amateur efforts as a left-leaning preparatory-school leader.

When De la Madrid Romandia was nominated for governor, Castro Bojorquez was appointed the campaign's coordinator of public relations. And when "Bob" took office, he appointed him the representative of the UABC [Autonomous University of Baja California] in the Federal District, and then De la Madrid got him close to his good friend Eliseo Mendoza Berrueto, who made him a member of the group of advisers of the Secretariat of Public Education.

There were to be further connections sometime later between Castro Bojorquez and "Bob." He became Gustavo Almaraz's image maker in his campaign for national senator and an adviser to another prominent Roberto man: Eduardo Manuel Martinez Palomera.

This Hugo Abel Castro Bojorquez is undeniably a key component of "Bob's" machine.

But this is not just a two-man show; it is made stronger by his brother Ruben Castro Bojorquez, who was with "Bob" first in Public Works and later in his six-year term served as rector of the Autonomous University of Baja California.

Hugo Abel Castro Bojorquez, in turn, connects with Jose Luis Anaya in CORETTE, Conrado Noriega in the UABC, and Jauregui in SAHOPE.

After this tangled web there comes another, very odd network of power.

"Bob," who during his administration brought in PAN [National Action Party] members like Hector Castellanos and Hugo Martin Solorio, later developed two unusual connections:

First, with Gilberto Portugal, whom he used as a "thug" in the 1981 university movement and in the squatter invasions to counter Catalino Zavala. From this connection came further ones with other "grassroots leaders" like Roxana and Alejandro Herrera and Agustin Perez Rivero.

The other connection was established with Eduardo Bertolini, the stormy leader of the FSTSE [Trade Unions Federation of Government Workers]. This connection was strengthened when Berttolini was a customs officer and Francisco de la Madrid Romandia ran this major federal agency.

He and Silerio are now the battering rams that move against potential candidates who are not to Roberto's liking.

Incredibly, even socialist Alejandro Moreno Berry is practically in Roberto's sway. The tandem that he formed just this past Thursday with Jose Luis Hernandez Silerio in the protest against the collection of the real estate tax is more than illustrative; it is obvious, altogether obvious.

Under such conditions the ground that "Bob" has gained clearly reveals his objectives:

- They may receive more votes in the internal elections to choose candidates for federal deputy and senator of the republic.
- If they do, Rene Trevino will move into the Senate, Castro Bojorquez into the presidency of the state PRI organization, Manuel Trasvina into a federal deputy's office, and Aaron Juarez Jimenez, who has hooked up with Gilberto Portugal, into another federal deputy's seat (how odd!).
- There will be a battle for a multimember district deputy's seat for Gustavo Almaraz, in the knowledge that if it is an elected seat, he will be defeated.
- The future objectives will be to place Marco Antonio Bolanos Cacho in a federal office or in the Tijuana municipal PRI organization.
- And Gilberto Portugal in a state congressman's seat, along with Hugo Abel Castro Bojorquez and Francisco Dominguez.

And the ultimate goal is:

- To have three candidates ready for the next gubernatorial election: Rene Trevino Arredondo, Gustavo Almaraz, and Alejandro Rosas Romandia.

This, in broad strokes, is "Project Bob," what Roberto would like his big political miracle to be.

Can he manage it?

If things continue as they have so far, he undoubtedly will.

But if Senator Luis Donaldo Colosio takes an objective, realistic look at the political scene, far removed from the misinformation of Luis Trevino, there could be a turnaround that would scuttle Roberto de la Madrid's plans.

In any event, our quaint "Bob" is again furnishing enough material for conversation.

For the time being, he has the political power of the Baja California PRI in his hands.

More power than Luis Donaldo Colosio himself.

Let us wait and see.

Belize

Dismissal of Factory Unionists Triggers Strike

FL1104145091 Bridgetown CANA in English 1245 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] Belize City, April 11, CANA—The sacking of 23 workers at a Taiwanese-owned garment factory here has triggered a work stoppage by employees belonging to the newly formed Women Workers Union.

Seven of the 23 sacked workers were officials of the union formed last month to press for improved working conditions for Belizean garment industry and domestic workers. Union President Beaulah Gentle said management of Civic Textile Company were "mad" about the formation of the union, and suggested the sackings were retaliatory. The garment factory employs 120 women.

The intervention of Labour Commissioner Gilbert Johnson Tuesday brought promises from the company to reinstate nine of the 23 workers. Johnson also assured the women that the Constitution of Belize allowed them to form a union to look after their interests.

Gentle said the union's position was that all 23 workers should be reinstated, and pledged the work stoppage would continue until that objective is achieved.

"I don't think anybody will go back to work because nobody has done anything wrong," she said. Civic textile officials refused comment on the dispute, saying they were ordered to do so from Taiwan.

The union was seeking better wages, a cafeteria on the factory compound, and transportation to and from work.

El Salvador

U.S. Advisers' Presence in Battle Reported

PA1104193391 (Clandestine) Radio Venceremos in Spanish to El Salvador 0000 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] Since 28 March, troops of the Atlacatl Battalion and Military Detachment No. 1 of the 4th Infantry Brigade, accompanied by two U.S. military advisers, have carried out an offensive operation against territories controlled by the FMLN [Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front] in Chalatenango Department. During 12 days of the government army's useless operations, the National Army for Democracy [END] inflicted 209 casualties on the government troops and seized large amounts of military supplies.

At this time we will establish contact with the comrades of our sister station, Radio Farabundo Marti, who have a report for us. Go ahead comrades of Radio Farabundo Marti in Chalatenango:

Good evening, listeners of Radio Venceremos and Radio Farabundo Marti. At this time we want to report to our people about the military situation in Chalatenango after 12 days of intense operations. The high command is suffering a crushing defeat in the large-scale offensive operations that the troops of the Atlacatl Battalion and Military Detachment No. 1 are carrying out in Chalatenango. In defense of the territories under our control and in support of our peace initiative in the negotiations, the END is punishing Cristiani's army, which is creating obstacles for the attainment of a cease-fire in El Salvador. The consequences of the high-ranking military chiefs' stubborn refusal to recognize the zones controlled by the FMLN are borne out by the soldiers during the unsuccessful operations in our zones. This is the case in Chalatenango, Usulutan, Guazapa, Morazan, and Santa Ana.

Just in Chalatenango from 28 April to 9 April, in 12 days of useless operations, the government army sustained a total of 209 casualties. We repeat: 209 casualties. These include a section chief, a patrol chief, three sergeants, and three corporals. In these 12 days of operations, our forces captured 10 prisoners of war. They have already been turned over to either the civilian population or to the International Red Cross.

We also want to report that in these 12 days, the END units have seized the following materiel: one M-60 machine gun, [number indistinct] rifles, three communications radios, 13,200 rounds of ammunition, 31 knapsacks and cartridge belts, and other supplies. We also want to report that the 209 casualties include 59 from the Atlacatl Battalion.

We must also tell the listeners of Radio Venceremos and Radio Farabundo Marti that since the beginning of the operation, 28 March, two U.S. military advisers have accompanied the Atlacatl Battalion on the operation they are carrying out in Chalatenango Department. These two advisers were transported aboard helicopters to the town of Arcatao.

This is the report we had on the military situation in Chalatenango. Go ahead, brothers.

Thanks, comrades of Radio Farabundo Marti, for this report on 12 days of offensive operations by the government army against our territories in Chalatenango and on the military actions by our forces against the troops attacking our territories. Specifically dealing with Chalatenango Department, a news conference was held today in Arcatao municipality. It was held by Commanders Jesus Rojas and Miguel Lopez of the END's Modesto Ramirez Central Front and was attended by foreign correspondents and television, radio, and newspaper reporters. The END news conference in Chalatenango was held in view of the large-scale operations carried out by the Atlacatl Battalion, Military Detachment No. 1, and the 4th Brigade. Political events confirm our front's territorial control in all these zones and the defeat of the high command's military plans. We confirm that these territories have been the object of persistent actions by the Atlacatl Battalion and the entire antidemocratic army, but in these 10 years of war, they have been unable to oust our revolutionary army.

FMLN Negotiator Says Talks on 'Good Course'

PA1104191791 Paris AFP in Spanish 0600 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Report by Antonio Ortega]

[Text] Mexico City, 11 Apr (AFP)—One week after the start of the negotiations between the Salvadoran Government and the FMLN [Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front], the dialogue is on a "good course," despite the "hard-line" positions and the "psychological warfare" unleashed by the extreme right wing in El Salvador, guerrilla Commander Rebeca Palacios told AFP on 10 April.

She stated that the FMLN concluded presenting its "package" of proposals on the "three fundamental topics" that have been discussed in Mexico since 4 April. They deal with constitutional reform, the Armed Forces, and a cease-fire.

Palacios, a member of the FMLN Political-Diplomatic Commission, said the 15-member government delegation maintains a "hard-line position" in the debate on constitutional Article No. 248, which prevents direct reforms and modification of which would open the way to the reform of other articles.

She stressed that the government delegates have "heard the proposals" and have said they will hold consultations on the guerrilla offers, but they have not presented any counterproposals and have delayed the discussion of article 248, the centerpiece of the negotiations seeking an end to the 11-year-old war.

She added that the FMLN maintains a "package of flexible proposals," and she commented that after a week of debate at two working tables in which the constitutional reform and the strategy for the cease-fire are being analyzed, "no time has been lost" and an agreement can still be reached.

The rebel commander admitted that the Mexico City negotiations will end on 23 April, so they still have 13 days to agree on constitutional reform. However, she said "the problem is one of political will" and not of time, because a plan can be presented in a few hours.

Rebeca Palacios (who is also known as Lorena Pena) stressed that there is a 30 April "deadline", the date when the current sessions of the Salvadoran Assembly will end. The Assembly would have to approve the eventual reform of the Constitution, specifically Article 248, so that the next assembly could ratify such a reform.

She underscored that the government's position reflects the "psychological warfare" that the extreme right wing has unleashed in El Salvador. She noted that in view of possible constitutional reform and the attacks on President Alfredo Cristiani, the government negotiators "close their minds at the negotiating table."

Palacios said they are also negotiating a cease-fire for the establishment of an "armed peace," which would separate the two armies. But, she stressed, the FMLN would not accept the establishment of "pockets" (security zones), because the military situation demands a unique plan.

She said that in the discussions of the cease-fire, where they are working on "common concepts, the government has realized that a cease-fire is not easy. It is afraid of a cease-fire because it must reflect the current balance of military forces and the government has lost control over a large part of the national territory."

"They have not (militarily) defeated us; neither side can demand the other side's surrender or disappearance." The cease-fire, therefore, must be designed to guarantee compliance with the agreements and to facilitate the "attainment of a definite peace," Palacios stressed.

She explained that the FMLN does not want to have El Salvador "divided into two pieces." Instead, it seeks an agreement that will permit the advance of demilitarization in the Central American nation, where the government does not provide social services to the residents of the zones "controlled" by the guerrillas.

Palacios said the search for peace is no longer only in the hands of the government and guerrilla negotiators, because it will be unacceptable if the negotiators say: "We have not reached an agreement, we are going to continue the war." This is so because the international community and Salvadoran social movements have mobilized in the search of a negotiated solution to the war.

She added that "spectacular results" had not been expected in the first week of the dialogue, so a recess, which might take place this weekend, could be used for the two sides to undergo consultations and to subsequently advance in the discussions.

The talks began on 4 April "without time limits," under the mediation of Alvaro de Soto, a UN appointee participating in the negotiations with a team of 10 experts.

FMLN Proposes 'Armed Peace' Before Agreement

PA1104212491 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 1749 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] Mexico City, 11 Apr (DPA)—A rebel leader stated today in the Mexican capital that the Salvadoran guerrillas want a preliminary period of "armed peace," during which the Army and the rebels would cease hostilities but keep their arms and territorial positions while awaiting the definitive agreements to come.

"As long as a cease-fire is in effect, the Army and the guerrillas must stay where they are under UN supervision, that is, in the territories under their respective control, and they may keep their arms," said Miguel Saenz, member of the Political-Diplomatic Commission of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN).

Saenz made this statement as he rejected as "unacceptable" the possibility that rebel forces would be confined to previously delimited territorial "pockets" during the cease-fire, as suggested by President Alfredo Cristiani in a message on 9 April.

The cease-fire is the main issue in crucial negotiations that have been taking place in Mexico for the past week between government and guerrilla delegates under UN mediation. The other points on the agenda are constitutional amendments and Army reorganization.

The Salvadoran president on 9 April said that his government will not recognize that there are territories under rebel control and will not negotiate the dissolution of the Army or extensive amendments to the Constitution. However, he admitted the possibility of reorganizing the Armed Forces and amending certain constitutional provisions for the sake of peace.

"That was actually a defensive message, which was directed toward ultra-rightist sectors of his party and the Armed Forces, which reflects the magnitude of conservative pressure against a possible negotiated solution to the conflict," Saenz said.

Nevertheless, the rebel leader described as "positive" the president's attitude of leaving open the possibility of amending the constitution and reorganizing the military hierarchy.

However, he described as "unacceptable" the suggestion of concentrating insurgent forces in zones especially delimited for this purpose.

"The guerrillas will have to stay where they are, arms in hand," Saenz stated as he recalled that the FMLN currently controls at least 25 percent of national territory.

He added that during the cease-fire, which he called an "armed peace," the FMLN and government must implement definitive agreements on constitutional amendments and on electoral, judicial, social, and economic issues to eliminate the original causes of the war.

He pointed out that "in addition, they must define the future of the military forces—of the government as well as of the guerrillas."

The cease-fire, the topic that has been the focus of attention of one of the two negotiating tables at the talks in Mexico, is currently being discussed by Army and FMLN experts under the supervision of the chief of the UN peace forces, Briton Marrack Goulding.

The other table, over which Alvaro de Soto, personal representative of UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar, presides is discussing constitutional amendments and Army reorganization.

Saenz said that, after having heard the views of each of the parties, the tables are now drafting working documents to summarize the positions of the government and rebels that will be discussed over the next two weeks.

"These are not easy negotiations. The pressure applied by ultra-right sectors has created a complex, very difficult situation, however, it is still possible to reach agreements," Saenz said as he reaffirmed the insurgent position that the negotiations are "irreversible."

FMLN Commander Rejects Army Claims of Control

PA1204001591 San Salvador Canal Doce Television in Spanish 0300 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] In Chalatenango, FMLN [Farabundo Marti National Liberaton Front] commander Jesus Rojas has rejected the statements by Army officers that the guerrillas do not control any part of the national territory. He also reiterated the need to negotiate geographical spaces in order to attain a cease-fire.

Referring to recent statements by government officials and Army members, who said that the Armed Forces are in control throughout the country, Rojas—the rebel commander in charge in the northern area of Chalatenango Department—said that the rebel forces control some areas of the country. Rojas said that the national territory is not indivisible because it has been divided in keeping with the Salvadoran reality which originated the causes of the armed conflict. In this regard, commander Jesus Rojas said that, as long as the internal causes that prompted the war are not resolved, the peace that the people are longing for will not be attained.

[Begin Rojas recording] The Armed Forces have stated that there are areas of guerrilla presence [persistencia]. However, the truth is that we have lived here for 10 years, with a permanent Army that controls these areas. The Armed Forces have insisted on trying to remove us from here for the last 10 years. In this regard, we can state that the Armed Forces are right by stating that we [words indistinct] of persistence of the elite battalions, which are the only ones that dare enter into our territories for limited periods of time. In the case of Chalatenango, this territory starts almost at the outskirts of the city of Chalatenango. [end recording]

According to the guerrilla commander, the transition period to arrive at a cease-fire is a test for the FMLN to see whether or not it is possible to coexist with different ideologies and to see if the causes of the conflict have truly been corrected.

[Begin Rojas recording] We all should recognize the realities of misery, injustice, and deep inequalities, which caused this war; we should also realize that some of the people rose up in arms and have become a political power. This has led to a dual-power situation in the country. If we do not recognize this reality as the basis for a solution of the conflict, it will be nearly impossible to reach a truly political solution because the government and the Armed Forces are practically demanding that we surrender and lay down our weapons. [end recording]

Commander Rojas said that they will not lay down their arms as long as there is no demilitarization and that a cease-fire and territoriality are being discussed by both sides in Mexico City in an effort to reach agreements leading to the end of the conflict.

FMLN Issues Communique on Negotiations

PA1204022191 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 2313 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Quotation marks as received]

[Text] Mexico City, 11 Apr (NOTIMEX)—The officers and combatants of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) today expressed their full support for the commission that is participating in the negotiations.

The commanders of all the FMLN military zones in 12 Salvadoran departments today issued a communique in Mexico City reaffirming: "Our army's subordination to the political directorate, as well as our willingness to fully comply with the resolutions that may be agreed upon at the negotiating table."

We are willing to reach a peaceful solution and cease hostilities under honorable conditions for both armed forces. This would mean that our army would keep all its weaponry and receive an acknowledgment of our territorial control," the FMLN noted.

In the communique the FMLN states its belief that the political agreements reached during the negotiations will pave the way for true democratic changes, with the participation of all the political forces in the national arena, including the FMLN, and at the same time achieve reunification of the Salvadoran family in a lasting and just peace.

The FMLN notes that the operations currently being carried out by the Armed Forces against all FMLN positions are desperate, last-ditch efforts that nothing will change and constitute provocations that force us to defend ourselves militarily."

The FMLN also states in the communique its awareness that peace is not easy to attain, and claims that there are radical forces that insist on ratcheting up and continuing the war to maintain their power and privileges."

The communique adds that the complete suspension of U.S. military aid to the Salvadoran Government and the Armed Forces would be an important contribution toward attaining peace.

To conclude, the FMLN urges the defense of positions already gained and notes that just peace and democracy are aspirations for which their members are willing to give their lives in the struggle against those who oppose peace.

Ponce Opposes FMLN's Territorial Claims

PA1204040191 El Salvador EL DIARIO DE HOY in Spanish 10 Apr 91 p 3

[Text] Defense Minister General Rene Emilio Ponce called ridiculous, fanciful, and unreasonable the FMLN-FDR [Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front-Democratic Revolutionary Front] pretension that they should be granted territorial rights in nine departments of the republic, as they have stated during the talks in Mexico City.

Ponce said that there only exists "the so-called persistence zones where the FMLN causes destruction then flees to settlements of displaced people."

The high-ranking military office said that the Army goes anywhere within the national territory, as stated in Article 211 of the Political Constitution, to guarantee enforcement of the law.

He added that the FMLN-FDR terrorists flee when the Army arrives then they hide in the camps of displaced people. "The Armed Forces refrain from acting to avoid endangering the lives of innocent civilians and out of respect for their human rights; but it does not mean that the terrorists have this territory under their control," the military officer emphasized.

Talking about the negotiations, Ponce said that the Armed Forces abide by the civilian mandate, from the political viewpoint, and will accept agreements reached by President Cristiani's government within the legal framework of the Political Constitution.

Referring to constitutional reforms, he added: "There can be no reforms at gunpoint or simply because a group of people wants them," he emphasized.

UDN Leader Comments on Cristiani Speech

PA1104200591 San Salvador Canal Doce Television in Spanish 0300 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Report by Ervin Ortiz]

[Text] UDN [National Democratic Union] leader Mario Aguinada Carranza said today that the speech delivered by the president on 9 April represented a concession to the right and a commitment to the United States.

[Begin Aguinada Carranza recording] The president's speech was very compromising because at this time, evidently, great pressure is being exerted from the right. Other forces that are pressuring the government are the United States, the people, and the international economic community; in sum, all those sectors that have been involved in any way in the dialogue process. [end recording]

These were the statements made today by Deputy Aguinada Carranza after the speech by the Salvadoran president. He said that Cristiani's speech showed his clear intentions to please the right and the U.S. Government. This attitude demonstrates, he continued, that there is a clear split in the government because two positions exist—one sector supporting negotiations and a radical sector opposed to the same. According to Aguinada Carranza, the radical sector is creating destabilizing conditions.

[Begin Aguinada Carranza recording] Alleged businessmen, supposedly many of them [words indistinct] and the campaign of the peace and labor crusade of the feminine front, etc. These organizations have always served the extreme right's interests. [Words indistinct] the campaign against the constitutional reform. Thus, we see a joint effort with the same objective. In other words, there are enough conditions to begin a period in which a coup

d'etat would be justified, from the viewpoint of the right. This would give an illegal character to the government and would prompt a breakup in the negotiations. This would also set the psychological stage for the justification of a coup d'etat. [end recording]

According to Aguinada Carranza, this kind of action would only favor the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front, because it would justify its armed struggle.

UNTS Accuses Rightists of Plotting Coup

PA120404891 San Salvador Canal Doce Television in Spanish 0317 GMT 12 Apr 91

[Text] The UNTS [National Unity of Salvadoran Workers] today accused the country's extreme right wing of sponsoring a coup against the government of President Alfredo Cristiani. According to the UNTS, reactionary sectors do not accept dialogue with the FMLN [Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front] and the possibility of reforming the Constitution, as the president has agreed to do.

According to the UNTS, Cristiani's speech over a radio and television network this week is only intended to calm the expectations of the extreme right wing, which has recently been shaken by announcements of changes in the Constitution. The UNTS has stated that there is a clear split in the government, in which some advocate change and others, more reactionary, resist these changes. This situation, which has aggravated the general situation, according to the UNTS, is undoubtedly encouraging a coup to protect the interests of the most powerful classes.

[Begin recording unidentified UNTS leader] In El Salvador, we know that coups are sponsored by the Armed Forces and ARENA [National Republican Alliance] members who are in the National Unity Front, the Women's Front, and the Crusade for Peace and Work. The U.S. Embassy, the Pentagon, and we Salvadorans know this well. We know that a coup would be perpetrated by these Front, ARENA and Armed Forces members. [end recording]

The UNTS has called on all sectors to carry out a crusade to orient changes in the Constitution and the Armed Forces and make it possible to complete the peace process. Within this framework, the UNTS has urged the Armed Forces to support the country's pacification, demanding that the government make the required changes.

[Begin UNTS leader recording] It should be demanded that the negotiation result in peace accords. Officers—majors, captains, lieutenants—and even privates have been shedding their blood needlessly for more than 10 years. It is these members of the Army who have admitted that a military impasse exists here and that they will not be able to win the war. Nevertheless, the colonels and generals who have been profiting from the U.S. aid do not want the war to end because their privileges and their houses in Miami would come to an end. [end recording]

The workers added that they completely reject General Colin Powell's remarks because they are warmongering and interventionist. Powell, the UNTS says, supports an armed solution to the Salvadoran conflict.

Guatemala

URNG Acceptance of Peace Initiative 'Victory'

PA120402291 Guatemala City EL GRAFICO in Spanish 11 Apr 91 p 6

[Text] Guatemala City, 11 Apr—President Jorge Serrano, through journalist Gonzalo Asturias, his public relations secretary, yesterday stated that the announcement of the URNG [Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity] accepting the proposed total peace initiative is a great victory for the Guatemalan people, who desire this peace.

Asturias reported that Serrano very optimistically said that all national sectors should support the peace initiative so that peace can become reality in short order.

Serrano said that the government's talks with the URNG will start as soon as possible, right after the National Reconciliation Commission, headed by Msgr. Rodolfo Quezada Toruno, sets a date for the talks to begin after consulting with both sides.

According to Asturias, Serrano said that he is aware of the importance of the task ahead to attain peace, but that all obstacles can be cleared with political determination and goodwill. Thus, peace can become reality and the tragic night of war can come to an end in Guatemala.

Mexico has not been ruled out as site for the talks. EL GRAFICO asked Asturias whether or not the talks could take place in Mexico as the URNG has proposed. It will be remembered that Costa Rica has also offered to host the talks.

Asturias said that the place for the meeting will perhaps be determined next week after the URNG formalizes its proposal through the National Reconciliation Commission. Asturias said that it is the commission that should receive the official response to President Serrano's proposal.

It will be decided whether the talks will take place in Costa Rica or Mexico after the response is received and both the government and the URNG are consulted. For the time being, however, it is too early to express an opinion on this matter.

Soviet Delegation Chief Comments on Powell Remarks

PA110420391 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 1815 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] Guatemala City, 11 Apr (DPA)—Aleksandr Mokanu, deputy chairman of the Soviet of the Union of the USSR Supreme Soviet, said in Guatemala City on 11 April that "we believe the Central American conflicts must be solved by the Central Americans and no country outside the region should intervene militarily, because democracy is not built with weapons."

Mokanu, who heads a delegation of Soviet parliamentarians who are visiting Guatemala, stated this in a news conference in answer to a question on recent remarks by U.S. General Colin Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Powell said in El Salvador that the United States could intervene in that country if a peaceful solution between the guerrillas and the government of President Alfredo Cristiani is not found.

Mokanu said that statement "is very serious. The Soviet Union currently believes that a political solution can be found to this problem, without going to war."

The Soviet parliamentarians are visiting Central America to begin or to strengthen relations with the countries of the region and to learn about their democratization process.

According to Mokanu, the USSR has not sent weapons to Nicaragua since 1988, and it is not currently sending them to Cuba, in keeping with the philosophy of perestroyka and glasnost.

New Finance, Economy Ministers Appointed

PA1204003191 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1900 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] Guatemala, 11 Apr (ACAN-EFE)—Guatemalan President Jorge Serrano today swore in new Finance Minister Richard Aitkenhead and new Economy Minister Juan Luis Miron.

Aitkenhead, who until today was the economy minister, replaced Finance Minister Raquel Zelaya, who resigned for health reasons.

These are the first changes in Serrano's cabinet since he took office on 14 January.

Honduras

Armed Forces Comment on DEA Sting Operation

PA1110422549 1

[Editorial Report] Following is a summary of Honduran media publications in Spanish reporting on the statements issued by Honduran Armed Forces officers concerning the seizure of 44 kg of cocaine aboard a Belize Air International airplane at the Ramon Villeda Morales International Airport in San Pedro Sula on Saturday, 5 April, and the subsequent issuance of a U.S. Embassy communique stating that the drug seizure was part of a DEA sting operation:

San Pedro Sula LA PRENSA on 11 April publishes a 700-word report on page 4 quoting Armed Forces Commander General Luis Alonso Discua Elvir on the case. Gen. Discua says that "the Public Security Forces [FUSEP] did the right thing when they captured, investigated, and arraigned the drug traffickers before the corresponding courts." He adds that the Armed Forces are currently "planning to create two antidrug military units" that will not "allow the violation of Honduran territory with antidrug operations that are detrimental to the nation's sovereignty." The military officer says "that the persons arrested during the seizure and the aircraft" used for the operation will "be turned over to the appropriate courts."

San Pedro Sula TIEMPO on 11 April publishes a 350-word report on page 10 with details of FUSEP spokesman Captain Cesar Augusto Somoza's statements on the case. Captain Somoza says that the FUSEP "acted with professionalism and the police did the right thing" and now the DEA must prove in court that the drug seized in the aircraft was being used in a controlled operation. The officer adds that "the note issued by the U.S. Embassy" concerning the drug seizure "is contradictory." He says that "the contradiction is quite clear" because the statement "first says that the drug was being brought to Honduras" and then it says "that the drug is in transit." Consequently, "the DEA must prove and clarify" the situation before Judge Fatima de Mena at the Second Criminal Court in San Pedro Sula. The FUSEP officer explains that "the Honduran Police knew nothing about this so the proper action was taken," adding that "if the drug had been allowed through" the authorities would have been incompetent.

The same paper on page 11 publishes a 650-word report on an interview with Colonel Julio Armando Pavon Rodriguez, commander of the 105th Infantry Brigade, by reporter David Romero Murillo. The military officer states that "the U.S. Embassy's declaration does not exonerate the people who participated in the cocaine trafficking operation" because "the Armed Forces are interested in protecting the people's health and the declaration does not discourage us; we will continue to exert ourselves to the utmost to prevent drug trafficking in our country."

Col. Pavon says that "all the evidence has been turned over to the corresponding authorities" and "the police will step aside after presenting the evidence" because "the courts of justice will be in charge of the suspects." The commander adds that "there are definitely certain situations, certain facts, and certain collateral elements that must be investigated" because "drug trafficking is a deeply rooted and vastly extensive operation." He stresses that "the Honduran Government is honest, and the Armed Forces commanders are men with an honorable and honest conduct," and they are exerting themselves "to protect the health of the American people, whom we consider our friends."

Callejas News Conference on Strike, Other Issues

PA1104161991 Tegucigalpa Voz de Honduras Network in Spanish 1755 GMT 9 Apr 91

[News conference by President Rafael Leonard Callejas with local reporters and unidentified moderator at the Presidential Palace in Tegucigalpa on 9 April—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Callejas] Good afternoon, journalists and Honduran people who are here with us today. I promised that

I would hold a news conference today to discuss issues that are of interest to the nation. At this news conference I will also discuss an issue that at the moment concerns us all: the call to strike issued by Fecesitlih [Central Federation of Unions of Free Honduran Workers], a democratic federation of unions. This call to strike has caught us by surprise.

On Friday [5 April] I met with Fecesitlih. At that time they gave me an eight-point document listing their demands. Six of the demands have been favorably resolved, one must be resolved by the office of the mayor and not the government, and the other, which has to do with the structural reorganization of the economy, has been resolved in a positive manner for government employees and members of central government unions. Therefore, I was surprised to learn that Fecesitlih had called for a strike immediately after hearing the government's response.

You have already read the bulletin issued by the government and know the government's position. I would like to tell the leaders of Fecesitlih that they are aware of the government's will and efforts. For some time now we have been searching for solutions to wage problems encountered by the various sectors. The government efforts have not been small. These efforts involve a 100-lempira per month wage increase for the lowest income groups and 2 million lempiras in bonus payments for those who are earning less than 500 lempiras. This means that some government employees, those who earn low wages, will be getting, more or less, a 40-percent raise. The government cannot afford to give more. We have heard the views of various groups, all members of Fecesitlih, and I believe that many of the members have not been accurately informed.

Yesterday we heard that Fecesitlih was holding a meeting and we asked that the labor and finance ministers be allowed to participate to explain the government's position. Our request was not accepted by Fecesitlih. Therefore, I believe that some of the leaders of the federation are not interested in solving the problem. The government hereby reiterates its willingness to give government employees a raise and a bonus payment for those who earn less than 500 lempiras, to hear the workers' problems, and to find the way to bring peace and tranquility to the country. I call on the federation leaders, the Fecesitlih Executive Committee, to change their ways and not continue along the wrong path. I also ask them to stop the strike, because they know it is not a legal or just strike.

Gentlemen, you may now ask your questions concerning this or any other matter you may consider important. Thank you for being patient; however, you must understand that under the current circumstances, I must stress resolving the problem that the Fecesitlih strike represents. You know that the government of the Republic and all the ministries are open and offering their services to the Honduran people. Access has been restricted at only four hospitals throughout the country. Access to all other government offices is guaranteed if government employees (?show up for work).

[Moderator] The journalists have the floor. Please identify yourself and the medium you represent.

[Gomez] Faustino Gomez Vaca, LA PRENSA. Based on the fact that you have already said that the strike is illegal, if the strikers carry out their threat, what will you do? Will you use force with the help of the Armed Forces, or will you continue with your policy of dialogue to reach a peaceful solution, if we can call it that?

[Callejas] The communique the government issued to advise the Honduran people of what is happening has three main points. First, the strike is illegal. Second, the strikers will be fined or punished according to the law. Third, the legal status of the federation will be suspended and, if necessary, it will be dissolved. These three elements are established in the country's labor laws and the government of the Republic calls on the various unions to help us avoid having to enforce the law. [passage omitted]

[Valeriano] Francisco Valeriano, Voz de Honduras Network and LA TRIBUNA. In light of the fact that declaring a strike illegal is not a very popular move for your government, do you not fear political attrition or a confrontation between the unions and your government?

[Callejas] More important than political attrition or loss of popularity is our responsibility to ensure that the country's laws and stability are respected. Had we not given them an affirmative answer, had we not agreed to raise the government workers' wages according to our capacity, had we not talked first with ANDEPH [National Association of Public Honduran Employees] and then with Fecesitlih, the call to a strike could be justified. That was not the case, however. The government had already negotiated, discussed, and given affirmative answers; therefore, I believe that my responsibility as president of the Republic is to guarantee the country's stability and the citizen's access to all state services. To do this we will enforce the law according to the law.

[Villanueva] Armando Villanueva, EL HERALDO. Mr President, do you think that the Fecesitlih strike could turn out to be like last year's Sitratelco [Trade Union of Tela Railroad Company Workers] strike? What will happen if in the next few hours FUTH [United Federation of Honduran Workers], Sitramedhys [Union of Medical, Hospital, and Related Workers], and Fesitranh [Federation of Honduran Trade Unions] join the strike? What measures would your government adopt if faced with such a strike?

[Callejas] I trust that the Fecesitlih leaders will realize that they are wrong and correct their mistake. We do not believe that what they have told their rank and file is the truth. A wage increase or bonus payment has been offered for all government employees earning less than 500 lempiras—this represents a 40-percent increase; steps have been taken to increase other wage scales by 90 or 100 lempiras; we are trying to resolve the wage problem; and we are trying to resolve six of the eight demands made. We must then ask: If we have been talking for the past four months with the Fecesitlih Executive Committee, if we participated.... [changes thought] In the beginning, the government of the Republic had thought of giving government employee a bonus payment. You know that this is true. Fecesitlih made us change our minds and asked for

wage adjustments. We agreed. All this was done within the framework of the talks. We resolved the problems we could, but we could not solve all the economic and financial demands Fecesitlih was making. Then why are they going on strike?

On Friday they walked into the Presidential Palace, presented me with their demands, and walked out. I answered affirmatively to their note. They did not respond. They called a meeting and immediately called for a general strike. Why? I ask the Honduran people and the union leaders: What do you want? You have your wage increases. We have given you our answer to your request for changes to the health laws. We have agreed to the joint appointment of a commissioner who will review the government agreements, and if these agreements have not been respected he will have the right to ensure that they are respected. The Fecesitlih proposal called for a meeting with the Honduran Postal Workers Union and its administration. It was suggested that the meeting be held yesterday and they refused. They asked that the meeting be held today at 1700. We are not to blame for the meeting not being held. Why is it that after the government gave favorable responses to their demands they still want to go on strike? I truly feel that this is not fair. The government employees are not supporting this strike. The government employees know that they need in this wage adjustment. There is only a small group that does not fall into the group that will receive the wage increase, therefore, I do not believe that there is reason for a strike. The government of the Republic hopes that the other unions will study the reasons behind the strike being called by Fecesitlih and will not heed this mistaken call because the Fecesitlih leaders are acting in an irresponsible manner. [passage omitted]

[Unidentified reporter] Th, government communique states that the strike is illegal, that those who support the strike will not be paid for time not worked, and that the federation could be stripped of its legal status. Nothing is said, however, about the workers who do not show up to work for more than three days.

On another subject, the opposition claims that your government says yes to anything that the international organizations want. They claim the Honduras' difficult situation is due to this.

[Callejas] Your second question does not require an answer. The government has stated, in writing, its position before the international organizations. The opposition just wants to be heard so that it can plan for the future, for the elections.

Regarding your first question, we will enforce the law. Our laws are quite precise in this regard. We have already told the [word indistinct] workers this. They have already been told that if they do not show up to work, the civil service law or labor code will be applied.

[Garcia] Giovanni Garcia, reporter for "Hoy Mismo" newscast. Will you call in the Army if the workers insist on going on strike?

[Callejas] We are going to ask the workers to analyze this situation in depth. We are going to ask them to think about what they are doing to the country, especially to Tegucigalpa. It is not a necessary strike. We gave them favorable answers yesterday. What we will do is enforce the laws and the mechanisms that the government has to avoid a groundless strike. [passage omitted]

[Lopez] Mr. President, Amado Lopez, from the "Blazing Trails" program. Allow me to change the subject. We heard a rumor here at the Presidential Palace that your closest advisers described as ridiculous and absurd; however, we did not hear your opinion on it. You said that during today's news conference you would tell us what you thought about the rumor of a possible coup d'etat during your trip to Europe. According to the rumors, [presidential designate] Jacobo Hernandez Cruz would take your place. Is there anything to this? The Presidential Palace advisers described it as absurd, but would I would like to hear what you have to say.

[Callejas] Democracy in Honduras is here to stay. The president of the Republic is elected for a four-year term. I will leave office on 27 January 1994 and the person who is freely chosen by the people will take over. By this I mean that the days of the coups d'etat in Honduras are over. The presidents are legal representatives of the people. Why am I so sure? Because the Honduran Armed Forces know that the role they had to play in the past, for one reason or another, is no longer in accordance with or convenient for the country and the Armed Forces. Second, the world is aware that democracy is the only way to progress. The world supports democracy and condemns its illegal disruption. In addition, our relationship with the various sectors of the nation create an optimistic and positive atmosphere for democracy. I can understand how some might take this rumor seriously, but at this moment I can assure you that never before in Honduran history has the democratic regime been as strong as it is today. [passage omitted]

[Unidentified reporter] Mr. President, I have two questions about General Colin Powell's visit. He talked about a possible military solution to the Salvadoran conflict, an intervention. Many people have said that he asked Honduras for help stop the arms race.

Now regarding the strike, some people have compared you to the former President Tiburcio Carias Andino. What do you think of this?

[Callejas] In the days of Gen. Tiburcio Carias Andino, there were no unions. That is the big difference. We respect the freedom of the unions. I believe that those union leaders who made that comparison should read up a bit on their history. This is a pluralist and democratic government. It is open to dialogue. Back then the situation in Central America and the world was quite different. There were no unions. Today we have unions and they are organized and we will continue to struggle to ensure that they continue to strengthen the country.

Gen. Colin Powell did not talk to me about the things you mentioned. We both agreed that it is important to stop the arms race. I wish to say that at no time did Gen. Powell

talk to me about these things. I told him that the Honduran Government was worried because there is still arms trafficking between Nicaragua and El Salvador and that we had seized weapons that apparently were being sent from Nicaragua for groups inside the country. He was aware of this because we had advised the UN Observer Group in Central America of this. This was the case of the person coming from Nicaragua who was arrested in Amastran. This person was bringing in illegal weapons for groups inside the country. [passage omitted]

Government, Unions Sign Agreement To End Strike

PA1104164591 Tegucigalpa EL HERALDO in Spanish 11 Apr 91 p 41

[Report by Armando Villanueva]

[Text] The strike by the Central Federation of Unions of Free Honduran Workers (Fecesitlih) ended last night when this organization accepted the government's proposal for 45 million lempiras worth of salary increases in exchange for a new readjustment next year.

The negotiations were held at the presidential house, where the weakness of the Honduran union movement was obvious. In this case, the lack of leadership by Fecesitlih leaders was evident given the fact that they called a strike which was not completely supported by the rank and file.

The negotiations were held without the presence of President Rafael Leonardo Callejas even though the deliberations were held a few feet from his office. The president played volleyball part of the time when the negotiations were being held.

After several hours of talks, which began at 1400 and ended 10 hours later, the union leadership was forced to accept the initial economic proposal presented by the government's negotiators, who firmly maintained their position.

The government negotiators were Labor Minister Rodolfo Rosales Abella and Government Minister Francisco Cardona Arguelles, who were under the direct supervision of presidential adviser Mario Rivera Lopez.

The labor sector was represented, among others, by Fecesitlih President Jose Angel Meza; Luis Yanez, president of the Confederation of Honduran Workers (CTH); CTH Vice President Neptali Garcia, and other leaders of the executive committees of the two labor organizations.

The agreements reached by the two sides are subject to the approval of the Fecesitlih assembly, which is made up of member unions.

In the negotiations, which ended close to 2300, Fecesitlih accepted the government's proposal which grants a total of 45 million lempiras to the government workers. This includes a salary readjustment and collateral benefits such as payments to the Teachers Retirement and Pension Institute, National Institute of Professional Training, Social Security, vacations, and bonuses.

In exchange, the government promised to approve a new salary increase for government workers next year, the amount of which was not decided but will be discussed in subsequent meetings between the two sides.

President Callejas also promised to halt the dismissal of government workers, respect labor stability, and reinstate the government workers who have been dismissed without justified cause.

The government also promised not to take reprisals against the government workers who actively participated in the strike, which began early on the morning of 9 April and ended near midnight last night.

The Executive Branch also promised to permit the participation of the workers, that is to say, the unions, in the privatization of state enteprises.

Nevertheless, the government did not accept the union's demand for a freeze on the prices of staples.

Fecesitlih had initially asked for 49 million lempiras worth of direct increases and demanded that the government absorb the collateral benefits. They later said they would accept the 45 million lempiras offered by the government, but in direct salary increases and the government would have to absorb the collateral benefits, bringing the total readjustments to 61 million lempiras.

Nicaragua

Antiriot Police Evict Striking Bank Workers

PA1204035991 Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 1815 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] The antiriot police took action this morning at the National Bank's Camino de Oriente branch and the National Development Brank's main office, located on the road to Masaya. The bank workers on strike are risking their respective jobs, according to an announcement issued yesterday by the government, because they seized the installations while shouting insults and issuing threats against national finance and government authorities.

Consequently, the police forces went into action to maintain order in those work centers, which serve the public. Policeman Juan Lopez suffered an arm injury—the circumstances are still unclear—when the National Bank workers were evicted from the main office.

* Formation of New Political Parties Reported

91P402134

[Editorial Report] Managua LA PRENSA in Spanish of 18 March 1991 on page 10 reports that a new political party called "The Producers," headed by attorney Danilo Ramirez Araica, has just been formed. According to the article, Dr. Araica and his supporters traveled around the country, organizing departmental and municipal leadership. An official party statement explains, "We are a labor party which defends the interests of those who produce the country's wealth. All Nicaraguans, regardless of social

origin, religious, or political beliefs may join.... We embrace the three principles of the French Revolution: liberty, equality, fraternity. The ideology of a Marxist-Leninist communist utopia has proven to be false, and has greatly harmed various countries throughout the world, including ours...."

Managua EL NUEVO DIARIO in Spanish of 5 March 1991 on page 2 reports the formation of a new political party on the Atlantic Coast organized by former FSLN [Sandinist National Liberation Front] cadre Justino Arceda Montoya. According to the article, Montoya, a former member of the ATC [Association of Agricultural Workers] and UNAG [National Union of Farmers and Cattlemen] executive committees, stated that his party, known as the Worker Peasant Democratic Party [POCD], has 20 party representatives in Atlantic Coast areas including Corn Island, El Tortuguero, Kukra Hill, Rio Cama, Bluefields, and Rama. The party will work for, among other goals, freedom in the areas of women's rights, the press, and education. Montoya, who is from Matagalpa, criticized the government's economic program, stating that the government "is making the same mistakes the FSLN made." Montoya further stated that he had been removed from the ATC executive committee because of his criticism of the FSLN.

Panama

Government, U.S. Sign Legal Assistance Agreement

PA1104183991 Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 1755 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] The Mutual Legal Assistance Agreement [MLAA] was signed this morning in the presence of President Guillermo Endara, Deputy Foreign Minister Jose Raul Mulino, and U.S. Ambassador to Panama Deane Hinton.

The main aim of this agreement, which was the center of discussion throughout the country for the past few months, is to combat laundered money resulting from drug trafficking.

Other government authorities and prominent local businessmen also attended the signing ceremony.

During his speech, Ambassador Deane Hinton voiced optimism about the possible results of the agreement. Meanwhile, President Endara gave his opinion on the MLAA signing:

[Begin Endara recording] We can no longer, the modern world can no loger combat crime unless it does so at an international level. This is why we are willing to sign agreements such as these, which are very just and advisable, with the United States, but also with other countries. We have made inroads in this regard with Great Britain and other countries in order to fully participate in this struggle against international crime. The second thing I wanted to say—and I will do so very quickly—is that we just crushed a dictatorial system that, among other things, sponsored international crime. [end recording]

Officials Comment on MLAA

PA1204035791 Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 2300 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Report by (David Salayandia) and Mercedes Arias—recorded passages are in quotation marks]

[Excerpts] [(Salayandia)] The Mutual Legal Assistance Agreement [MLAA] was signed this morning in the Ricardo J. Alfaro Room at the Foreign Ministry. This agreement has been cause for heated debated at international and local levels because it was felt that it could be harmful to the Panamanian banking system.

[Arias] The United States will gain much more than Panama will from the signing of this agreement, though in the long run this agreement will be good for Panama. Several years ago Panama started to be identified internationally as a center for the laundering of drug money. Today, with the signing of this agreement, this image will be erased without hurting the Panamanian banking system.

[Second Vice President Guillermo Ford] "I believe that it is an important step for this country, because this government is committed to the eradication of all crime, especially crimes related to drug trafficking.

[Unidentified reporter] "Will this affect the Panamanian banking system?

[Ford] "No it will not. We cannot be a haven for scoundrels."

[Arias] One of the most discussed issues prior to the signing of the MLAA was the fiscal issue. Some Panamanian sectors believed that if Panama signed the agreement, the United States would be free to meddle in Panama's fiscal affairs. However, this will not be the case.

[Deputy Foreign Minister Jose Raul Mulino] "The agreement does not include fiscal matters unless drug trafficking or money laundering activities can be proven. Otherwise, no fiscal matters are included in the agreement."

[(Salayandia)] The agreement was signed by Deputy Foreign Minister Jose Raul Mulino and U.S. Ambassador to Panama Deane Hinton. President Guillermo Endara, other government officials, and prominent Panamanian businessmen attended the signing of the agreement. [passage omitted]

In his remarks following the signing of the agreement, Deputy Foreign Minister Jose Raul Mulino stated that Panama will continue to use all possible resources in its struggle against drug trafficking.

[Mulino] "In conclusion, I wish to state that the agreement we have signed today includes all the essential points necessary to protect our national interests and it will be an efficient instrument for the Panamanian authorities to use in investigating, trying, and ending those crimes foreseen in the agreement." [passage omitted]

[(Salayandia)] Not only are the advantages Panama will receive from the signing of this agreement established in the agreement, this could also represent economic aid for the country.

[Panamanian economist Guillermo Chapman; identified by caption] "That is quite evident. This was not just talk. It was said from the very beginning and it is stated in an agreement signed by the Panamanian Government in 1990. The agreement stated the conditions for the disbursement of a certain amount of promised aid. The signing of this agreement was one of those conditions. That is the way it is." [passage omitted]

Negotiator Rejects Accusations

PA1204043191 Panama City Radio KW Continente in Spanish 2228 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Interview with Julio Berrios, a member of Panama's Mutual Legal Assistance Agreement [MLAA] negotiating team, by Jenny Lee Martinez in Panama City on 11 April—recorded]

[Text] Julio Berrios, a former legal adviser at the Foreign Ministry, has responded to the accusations leveled against him by the U.S. NEWS AND WORLD REPORT, which claims that Berrios was involved in the laundering of money from drug trafficking. Berrios said that he is paying a political price for opposing certain sections of the MLAA.

[Begin recording] [Berrios] Why have they issued this report precisely on the day on which the treaty was signed? It is logical; I must pay a political price for opposing the United States' exorbitant plans. They have availed themselves of a circumstantial matter to create a political storm—which is customary with Americans—and to attempt to discredit all of the people who are opposed to their hegemonic interests. This is the way the United States behaves. When an investigation is conducted, the law that regulates drug matters in Panama prohibits the disclosure of information or comments before an individual's culpability or innocence is proven through the investigation. The United States did the same thing to the president of the Republic, now it is doing it against me, and tomorrow it will be done against others who may oppose its—let us say, imperialist—interests, which it has always tried to impose on the international community.

[Martinez] The article states, doctor, that you rejected certain parts of the treaty, but the Panamanian Government signed the treaty today.

[Berrios] In effect, the Panamanian Government signed the treaty, but under acceptable conditions for us: everything related to the drug trade will be investigated to prevent traffickers from using Panama's banking center. However, this was not the United States' intention; its real intention was to search for individuals who have failed to pay their taxes. The United States was attempting to use drug investigations as a pretext to track down individuals for activities which, in our country, are not crimes. Anyone who opposes the United States' intentions must face accusations such as those leveled against me.

[Martinez] To conclude, Dr. Berrios, the MLAA was signed today. What does this mean for the Panamanian people? Would you explain since you participated in the negotiations and are knowledgeable about the treaty?

[Berrios] The treaty that was signed today is similar to the treaty signed by The Bahamas and the United States in 1986, which went into effect in August 1990. The Bahamian treaty excludes investigations into fiscal crimes per se; in other words, crimes involving tax evasion, accrued payable taxes, or tax payments. These crimes can be investigated only when they are linked to drug trafficking or other serious crimes, as the treaty itself states in Article 2.

This treaty does not include the excessive demands made by the U.S. negotiators—demands which the Panamanian Foreign Ministry and negotiators rejected. We drew up a treaty which, in my opinion, is in keeping with national interests. The United States has always falsely accused Panama's banking center of being involved in money laundering. The deposits which they believe are the result of money laundering have come from U.S. banks through fund transfers.

Drug traffickers do not come to Panama to deposit cash. They consume drugs, they have their distribution networks, and they make cash deposits in U.S. banks. Then when these funds are transferred to Panama, the United States gets excited and levels accusations against a financial center that has confidence in the seriousness of U.S. banks. These are the facts concerning the entire problem.

We must stop the infamous campaign which the United States of America has always conducted against the Republic of Panama. I believe the treaty will help dispel the image that certain U.S. sectors have attempted to establish throughout the world against Panama. [end recording]

Tension Between Linares, U.S. Ambassador Noted

PA1104194991 Panama City EL DIARIO INDEPENDIENTE in Spanish 11 Apr 91 p 8

[From the "Quick Overview" column by Guillermo Rodolfo Valdes]

[Text] Does Linares worry the U.S.? Do not look now, but tension between Foreign Minister Julio Linares and the conceited U.S. Ambassador Deane Hinton persists behind the scenes. Despite all his attempts, Hinton has been unable to bend Linares' nationalism. As a result of this, it is not surprising that the foreign minister has become a thorn in the side of the gringos, and thus, his departure from that post has become their obssession....

Calderon Vows To Lead Opposition After Breakup

PA1104161791 Panama City LA PRENSA in Spanish 11 Apr 91 p 14

[Article by Althea Foster de Chavarria]

[Text] Ricardo Arias Calderon, president of the Christian Democratic Party (PDC), will not resign his post of first vice president of the country and warned he will take over the leadership of a democratic opposition against the government of Guillermo Endara.

"To resign the Vice Presidency would be to resign from the commitment I have with the Panamanian people," Arias Calderon emphasized. The PDC leader said that according to the Constitution, the post of vice president does not entail any executive responsibilities "and therefore it is not incompatible with the leadership of a democratic and civic opposition."

The PDC decision of joining the opposition ranks means that the PRD [Democratic Revolutionary Party], the main party that supported Noriega, now becomes a "arbiter" within the Legislative Assembly, and it can tip the political balance with its vote.

Arias Calderon rejected the conciliatory terms Endara used one day after having strongly charged that the PDC leaders were "haughty and arrogant." According to Arias Calderon, Endara has now used conciliatory terms "because he realizes the high price his government will have to pay for the decision he made" against the PDC.

"Endara no longer has the cooperation of persons who are truly hard working, honest, and filled with ideas for a new democracy. In addition, he rejected the support of the 28 PDC legislators in the Legislative Assembly, without stopping to think he was chosing an understanding with the former followers of the dictator Noriega in the Assembly."

He pointed out that to achieve this understanding, Endara will have to exchange political favors with them (the PRD legislators), and this will prevent the implementation of justice in the country, which is what the people want and are demanding. "Guillermo Endara made a political mistake, and he is going to have to live with its consequences," he warned.

When asked about the possibilities that the government will eliminate the Legislative Assembly, as some legislators told LA PRENSA, he said that there are some "hotheaded individuals" among the people who surround and follow the president and who have probably contemplated the idea. He pointed out, however, that this "would be an unfortunate" action.

"Inasmuch as he does not have a majority in the Assembly, the political forces supporting him are in the minority, and his prestige continues to be marred, he is going to find himself much weakened. Undoubtedly, this explains why absurd and arbitrary ideas might come up, including the closing of the Assembly," Arias Calderon explained. "I hope that Endara is not contemplating any such measures, because this would be disastrous for Panama."

Concerning reports to the effect that the PDC is allegedly responsible for an attack against the headquarters of the Arnulfists, Arias Calderon said that it "is just another ludicrous charge." The opposition leader added that "the country can no longer take this. One does not know whether to laugh or cry over what is happening in Panama under such ludicrous circumstances."

Referring directly to Endara, he pointed out that the charges against the PDC "make no sense whatsoever and they are part of a sort of political pathology and fear among certain people who are hotheaded and who, in a political frenzy, have accused the PDC of preparing coups d'etat, of importing weapons, and of intercepting telephone calls." Arias Calderon noted that the interesting part is that they do not present any evidence, do not start any investigations, much less order any arrests. "I have repeatedly said that if they take these charges seriously, then they should order my arrest," Arias Calderon said.

He also emphasized the biggest obstacle this country, above all the PDC ministers, faces is the "arbitrary implementation" of the budget by Comptroller General Ruben Dario Carles. He explained that last year over 300 million balboas that were in the budget were not spent. In this "incomplete and arbitrary" implementation, the comptroller has always given an important position to the financial expenditures but neglected social expenses.

Arias Calderon added that this is because Carles "has no social feelings," and because the funds are under the responsibility of the PDC. "Now that the comptroller has managed to lead the president of the Republic to evict the PDC from the government, he will now provide the ministers replacing the Christian Democrats with the resources he had previously denied and then argue that we were the problem," he concluded.

Calderon's Remarks Viewed

PA1104164491 Panama City LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA in Spanish 11 Apr 91 pp A1, A16

[By James Aparicio, from the LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA news staff]

[Excerpts] Ricardo Arias Calderon, first vice president of the Republic and leader of the opposition Christian Democratic Party (PDC), said yesterday that "a bunch of ludicrous actions" are being imposed on Panama, turning it into a country "that does not seem to have a clear direction and frequently experiences crises." [passage omitted]

Arias Calderon described the PDC as a spokesman "of the social needs of the country." In addition, he demanded that the letter of intent that Panama signed with international financial organizations be made public.

"Definite proposals already exist and this document should be made public," Arias Calderon expressed. [passage omitted]

They Want the Resignation of Attorney General Cruz

For Arias Calderon, it is important to resolve what he described as "critical problems," primarily in the economy and justice fields.

Arias Calderon warned that the PDC will exert pressure to achieve the resignation of Attorney General Rogelio Cruz, because "his career is not worthy of trust by the country." [passage omitted]

Arias Calderon said that there are "indications of a relationship," of alliance between the current government parties, namely the PA, PLA [Authentic Liberal Party], and Molirena [Nationalist Liberal Republican Movement, with the PRD, because "politics has its own mathematics."

Reports Nepotism in the Government

Arian Calderon also said that cases of nepotism in the Endara administration "are evident." He regretted that the betrayal of Endara was the "deepest feeling," when bringing the ADOC to an end. [sentence as published]

For Arias Calderon "there is a very serious weakening" in the government, but he admitted that, despite this, "we are living in a democracy."

Arias Calderon concluded: "We are and we will continue to be the spokesmen of the people who feel frustrated, and we will be the spokesmen of the poor in our country."

Poll Shows PDC Stronger

PA1204001291 Panama City LA PRENSA in Spanish 11 Apr 91 p 1

[Report by Nubia Aparicio S.]

[Text] According to an opinion poll carried out by Dichter & Neira, at the request of LA PRENSA, the Christian Democratic Party (PDC) has come out stronger from the break up of the government alliance, which was "promoted by Arnulfist Party members to gain more political spaces" and which is detrimental to the country.

The poll was answered by 822 people of both sexes and from all over the country. The results indicate that 25.8 percent of the people polled believe that the crisis has strengthened the PDC while 15.8 percent believe the Arnulfist Party is stronger.

According to the poll, which was conducted by telephone, 19.5 percent of the people believe Molirena [Nationalist Liberal Republican Movement] is stronger now while 13.3 percent believe the opposition Democratic Revolutionary Party (PRD) has come out stronger. The poll was taken on 8 and 9 April.

According to 30.8 percent of those polled, the lack of agreement and the desire for political spaces are the main reasons for the break up of the governing alliance.

A high percentage of the population (56.9 percent) did not support President Endara's decision to restructure his cabinet, and 36.7 percent agreed with the measure.

Although, in general—and this has been reflected by previous polls—the cabinet members were not very popular, an important percentage of the people polled considered that Guillermo Endara's decision was not the best. Furthermore, the respondents considered that it is detrimental for the PDC to have gone to the opposition. The reason: If there were no advances in government when the PDC was in it, now that the PDC is in the opposition, it will block any measure that attempts to generate development.

Regarding whether it was beneficial or detrimental for the country for the PDC to have gone to the opposition, the majority of those polled (60.2) responded that it is detrimental; only 27.3 percent said the contrary.

Following the cabinet changes, Ricardo Arias Calderon warned that President Endara would have to govern the country with the PRD that supported Noriega's military dictatorship.

The PDC has stated on several occasions that it is not afraid of returning to the opposition, referring to its struggle against the Noriega regime. However, Endara replied that the PDC legislators have always behaved "as a true, although sly, opposition" and, therefore, nothing will change when they carry out their threat.

Reaction to Breakup Continues

PA1104132791

[Editorial Report] Panama City EL SIGLO in Spanish on 10 April, on page 4, publishes an editorial of some 350 words entitled "The Legislative Assembly's Unswayable Responsibility." The newspaper, in noting the legislators' responsibility, states that despite their political differences with the other parties, the parliamentarians should not block the laws presented at the Legislative Assembly which benefit the people. We are sure, the newspaper states, that the Christian Democratic Party [PDC] will use its know-how, information, and undeniable analytical capability to carry out its duty within the constitutional framework. To conclude, the editorial notes that "President Endara will have the best opposition that any regime can have" with the Christian Democrats in the Legislative Assembly, "if that regime wants an intelligent, severe and agile, but at the same time respectful scrutinizer."

The same paper on page 4 carries the regular 400-word "Period and That Is It" column by Jaime Ortega. Today's column is entitled "Notes" and explains to President Guillermo Endara what the social debt is, because, notes Ortega, he does not seem to know its meaning. Ortega tells Endara that he hopes "one day you will take the time to find out what the poor people's needs are. This, Mr. Endara, is social debt." Ortega goes on to comment on people who, in the past, fiercely attacked President Endara and his wife, but now accept a public position in exchange for their silence. Ortega notes that Antonio Dominguez, new immigration director, publicly admitted last night "that there are decent people in the PRD [Democratic Revolutionary Party]." What nerve he has, concludes Ortega.

The same paper on page 5 carries the regular 400-word "Commitment to Justice" column by Dagoberto Franco entitled "The Devil Does Not Pay Well." The column states that the ousting of the Christian Democrats from the alliance only confirms what has been said all along: The fight was for political positions. We do not doubt Ricardo

Arias Calderon's good intentions when he claims that his party has been concerned from day one with the social debt. But, notes Franco, we cannot forget that these same Christian Democrat legislators approved Law 25, which is unconstitutional, illegal and unfair, resulting in the firing of thousands of workers, just to please Endara. Now, states Franco, it is their turn to be fired. "Let us hope that the Christian Democrats will now approve the laws that benefit the people," the column concludes.

Panama City EL DIARIO INDEPENDIENTE in Spanish on 10 April publishes on page 11 an approximate 200-word statement signed by the Legislative Assembly president on President Endara's decision to change his cabinet. The statement notes that "the Constitution acknowledges the president's authority to restructure his cabinet and carry out the changes he may deem necessary, within the executive branch," for the benefit of the nation's sacred interests.

The same paper on page 11 carries an approximate 350-word article on remarks by Francisco Artola, legislator and provisional president of the Arnulfist Party, on the ousting of the PDC from the alliance by President Endara. According to the article, Artola said "neither here nor in any part of the world can any president rule under pressure." In conclusion, Artola said that "the government must be changed, from top to bottom, and anyone who does not respond to President Endara's policies will be replaced."

Officials on Safeconducts for Noriega Cronies

PA1204023691 Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 1730 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] Olimpo Saez, chairman of the Legislative Assembly's Foreign Relations Commission, has said that the Panamanian Government will grant safeconducts to Luis Gomez, who sought asylum at the Cuban Embassy; Rafael Arosemena, who sought asylum at the Mexican Embassy; and Gonzalo Gonzalez and Heraclides Sucre, who sought asulym at the Peruvian Embassy.

[Begin Saez recording] The Panamanian Government has not acted alone, but international pressure and the need to normalize our international relations with Latin American organizations and countries compels us to issue the safeconducts even though we know that a majority of the people in the country do not understand the measure.

Nevertheless, Panama has the obligation to issue the safeconducts to normalize its international relations. The Panamanian people must understand—although the government and many Panamanians do not like it—that the safeconducts are necessary for the sake of our international relations because Panama's international image is deficient. [end recording]

Deputy Foreign Minister Jose Raul Mulino also said:

[Begin recording] [Mulino] We are trying to find formulas to solve the problem as soon as possible, but there is no definite date or specific formula yet.

[Reporter] How is it possible that these persons, who caused so much damage to the Panamanians and who have been charged with crimes and theft, will be given safeconducts?

[Mulino] I share your feelings and frustration about the whole issue but the curious thing is that, although the Noriega regime was ousted 15 or 16 months ago, these people are still causing problems from those diplomatic missions. They are still causing problems and the Republic of Panama is facing a very difficult situation—at the national and international level. [end recording]

Bolivia

Minister, General Deny Reported 'Saber Rattling'

PY1204033891 La Paz Television Boliviana Network in Spanish 0200 GMT 12 Apr 91

[Text] The government rejected the rumor of saber rattling that was published by a local medium. Information Minister Mario Rueda Pena said:

[Begin Rueda Pena recording] I categorically deny that anything like that is true. I stress that to accuse the Armed Forces of saber rattling, which is the symbolic way of saying that they are preparing a coup, is a serious offense to the institution as regards an aspect of which all Bolivians know the military is proud; that is, their loyal institutional commitment to serve and preserve the democratic system. [end recording]

General Jorge Moreira, Armed Forces commander in chief, told us on the same issue:

[Begin Moreira recording] We went to see the president of the Republic to assure him that the Armed Forces will guarantee the democratic process and will support the government installed in accordance with the Constitution and the laws. I conveyed this message to the president. We also submitted a series of projects and programs that have been prepared by the Army to help, as an institution and part of the Armed Forces, to the development of the country. These are the two topics we discussed two nights ago. [end recording]

Rueda Pena Refers to U.S. Official's Remarks

PY1104204091 La Paz Television Boliviana Network in Spanish 0200 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Excerpt] According to statements made in the U.S. Congress yesterday by Melvyn Levitsky, the Bolivian Government must overcome its corruption problems if the economic aid for alternative development and interdiction actions is to be normalized. Bolivian Information Minister Mario Rueda Pena said that Mr. Levitsky was not exclusively referring to Bolivia but also other Latin American countries.

[Begin Rueda Pena recording] According to clear and categorical assertions by many U.S. authorities, all the obstacles that hindered cooperation with our country, without the framework of bilateral agreements, have disappeared. The criticism by the U.S. official you mentioned has also been resolved since it is the Bolivian Government's desire to end corruption, and in fact we are taking concrete steps in this aspect, for example the Safco [Administrative and Financial System for Government Control] law and other measures that will be implemented in the next few weeks.

I also think that there is another element within the statement made by that U.S. official which should be taken into consideration by the media. He clearly said—I heard this myself— that when speaking of corruption, the United States is not referring specifically to Bolivia but also to other Latin American countries. He mentioned some concrete cases which I do not want to repeat and he even mentioned a subject that is very important: corruption in the United States itself, which is understandable because the drug trafficking mafia has such economic power that it has become a factor of corruption among the subordinate structures participating in the antidrug trafficking struggle.

This is original sin [pecatas mea]. The economic power of drug trafficking corrupts human nature, and human beings are always weak and sensitive to that kind of reproachable action.

In general, I want to say that Bolivian-U.S. relations are at their best level. Cooperation plans are excellent and nothing will hinder the compliance of the goals set within this bilateral framework of cooperation. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Students Reject Militarization, Mining Code

PY1104161191 La Paz Radio Fides Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] In light of the congressmen's official decision to authorize the presence of U.S. military advisers in the country, who have come to turn the Manchego and Jordan Battalions into murders of their brothers, and in view of the congressmen's decision to approve the amendments of the mining code whereby they authorized the privatization of state-owned mines and the surrender of our natural resources to imperialism, the representatives of the university movement have made the following decisions:

1) To strongly reject the militarization of the coca producing areas and to support the resolution [words indistinct].

2) To oppose the amendments of the mining code and to express solidarity with the wave of mine occupations that will lead to a similar occupation [words indistinct] to avoid their privatizations.

3) To call upon the university community to reject the criminal resolutions issued by Congress, and to organize a struggle through those exploited [words indistinct] a corrupt and treacherous government.

Signed: Daniel Fernandez, representative of students of the Architecture Faculty and Arts School of the Greater University of San Andres [UMSA]; Ramiro Aguilar, representative of the UMSA student center of the [word indistinct]; Osvaldo [last name indistinct], representative of Social Communication Center; and Jose Luis Careca, representative of Social Science Faculty and of the Sociologist Student Center of the UMSA.

Brazil

Government Issues Communique on Debt Payments

PY1104145491 Sao Paulo FOLHA DE S1O PAULO in Portuguese 9 Apr 91 p 6

["Text" of Brazilian Government press communique dated 8 April]

[Text] In New York on 8 April, Brazil and the creditors banks Steering Committee reached an agreement in principle on the payment of arrears up to 31 December 1990.

Before it is formalized, this agreement in principle will be submitted to the Federal Senate for consideration under the terms of Resolution 82.

The basic points of this agreement are:

1) Twenty-five percent of the arrears and the interest corresponding to this portion will be paid in cash, provided the total does not exceed $2 million; the remaining 75 percent plus any amount in excess of the aforementioned limit will be converted into bonds;

2) Of the amount in cash, 45 percent will be paid when the term sheet on the arrears is completed, and the remaining 55 percent will be paid later in equal monthly installments, the last of which will fall due in December of the current year. The balance will be paid at one time when the term sheet on the public sector medium- and long-term debt is completed;

3) The bonds will be issued and delivered to the creditor banks when the term sheet on medium- and long-term debt is completed. They will have the following features:
—Maturity: 10 years;
—Grace period: Three years;
—Amortization: Increasing by the following percentages for six-month periods:
One to three: 1 percent
Four to six: 2 percent
Seven: 4 percent
Eight to ten: 8.5 percent
Eleven to fifteen: 12.3 percent
—Interest: Two options for choice by each bank:

Option A: Fixed rates for the first three years (7-13/16 percent, 8-3/8 percent, and 8-3/4 percent, respectively), and in the remaining years, six-month LIBOR [London Interbank Offered Rate] plus 13/16 percent;

Option B: Six-month LIBOR plus 13/16 subject subject to the following limits: first year, 7.2 and 6 percent; second year, 7.7 and 6 percent; and third through fifth years, 8.2 and 6 percent;
—Form: bearer
—Can be used in the privatization program and other debt-conversion programs to be created.

The Brazilian Government considers the agreement to be very positive because it takes into account the country's fiscal and foreign exchange needs. First, the cash payment in installments suits the level of international reserves. Second, due to the grace period and the low percentages for principal amortization in the first years, the future outlay for bond payments appears to be compatible with the severe fiscal restrictions that will prevail during the national economy's critical recovery phase.

In addition, the Brazilian Government views with satisfaction the unprecedented advances made in the negotiation on arrears by establishing fixed rates and limits to interest rate variations in the initial period, thus reducing the country's vulnerability to significant fluctuations in the international financial markets. Last, given the coupling of the issuance of bonds with completion of the term sheet on the medium- and long-term debt, the Brazilian Government believes that a basis is properly laid for a permanent solution of the public sector's external debt without jeopardizing the fundamental objectives of financial stabilization and a resumption of self-sustained growth.

Brasilia, 8 April, 199 .

Union Joins PDC; Workers Movement Formed

PY1004214491 Rio de Janeiro Rede Globo Television in Portuguese 1600 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Text] For the first time in the history of Brazil, a labor central will be an official member of a political party. Today in Brasilia the Christian Democratic Party [PDC] and the General Federation of Workers [CGT] signed an agreement through which the CGT becomes the labor branch of the PDC. The agreement was signed by CGT President (Tanindel Pegaso) and PDC President Jose Maria Eymael.

The Christian Democratic Workers Movement [Movimiento Trabalhista Democrata Cristao] was also established. The movement will group workers throughout the country. The ceremony was held on the Chamber of Deputies floor.

* Pace of Amazon Region Deforestation Declining

* INPE Survey Results

91WN0323A Sao Paulo O ESTADO DE S.AO PAULO in Portuguese 7 Mar 91 p 12

[Text] The deforestation of Amazonia is slowing down, according to the figures in the latest survey by the National Institute of Space Research (INPE) as released yesterday: 13,818 square km of forest were cleared between August 1989 and August 1990. In absolute terms, the area in question is still large—the equivalent of half the the State of Alagoas—but even so, that is 36 percent less than the deforestation recorded over the previous decade (between 1978 and 1988), when the average area was on the order of 21,135 or 21,500 square km per year, including areas cleared for the construction of hydroelectric plants.

According to INPE's Director General Marcio Nogueira Barbosa, the repetitive nature of the surveys, which are based on images produced by the U.S. Landsat satellite in 1978, 1987-1988, 1989, and 1990, now makes it possible to produce a table showing how deforestation has progressed. And in that table, the gradual deceleration of deforestation is starting to be visible.

The state with the most deforestation in absolute terms is Para (4,902 square kilometers), followed closely by Mato Grosso with 4,026 square kilometers. This is an indication that big ranches—especially cattle ranches—are continuing to advance on the forest, although at a slower rate than in previous years, when the rate of deforestation in Para reached 7,000 square kilometers per year. With 35.9 percent of its area deforested, Maranhao continues to be the most

devastated state. And Rondonia, where 1,676 square kilometers were cleared last year, is still in second place, with 13.9 percent of that state's area having been altered.

The most disturbing change is that in the State of Amapa. Although practically intact so far, with only 0.9 percent of its territory deforested, Amapa was the only state to show a rising rate of deforestation. The rate of clearing in Amapa between 1978 and 1988 totaled 73 square kilometers per year. Between 1988 and 1989, that rate rose to 139 square kilometers, and last year it jumped to 262 square kilometers.

Including this latest report on deforestation, the total forest area altered by man in Brazil's legal Amazonia comes to 415,251 square kilometers. That amounts to 8.5 percent of Amazonian territory. The INPE's study divides the total into three types of alteration. Very old deforestation adds up to 97,643 square kilometers. Recent deforestation to make room for ranches, settlement projects, mining companies, and cities accounts for 312,781 square kilometers. And areas inundated by hydroelectric plants cover 4,827 square kilometers.

Annual Deforestation of Amazonia

State	1978-79	1987-88-89	1989-90
Acre	632	553	558
Amapa	73	139	262
Amazonas	1,516	1,191	533
Maranhao	2,455	1,432	1,112
Mato Grosso	5,152	5,973	4,026
Para	7,000	5,762	4,902
Rondonia	2,347	1,441	1,676
Roraima	303	636	161
Tocantins	1,657	744	588
Legal Amazonia	21,135	17,871	13,818

The latest survey carried out by the INPE shows that the rate of devastation in terms of square kilometers per year has declined but is still disturbing.

Source: INPE (National Institute of Space Research)

Monitoring

This year the altered area was calculated by a completely automatic process using digitizing boards, and that should have the effect of reducing the margin of error from 10 to 5 percent. The figures and an atlas containing those maps have been supplied to IBAMA (Brazilian Institute for the Environment and Renewable Natural Resources) and are to be used for the next forest burning season in June. "The INPE is also producing deforestation maps by municipality to make the task of monitoring even easier," says Marcio Barbosa. Those maps should be ready by August of this year.

The new figures are also being sent to international organizations such as the World Resources Institute, the World Bank, the United Nations, and so on, which have been saying that Brazil's Amazon region is being deforested at an annual rate of from 40,000 to 80,000 square kilometers. Those institutes are to correct their reports on the basis of the INPE's surveys.

* Goldemberg Comments

91WN0323B Rio de Janeiro O GLOBO in Portuguese 7 Mar 91 p 22

[Text] Brasilia—The deforestation of Amazonia in 1990 declined by 27 percent in terms of the year before, according to an announcement yesterday by Jose Goldemberg, the secretary of state for science and technology. His calculations indicate that if the government is able to continue that rate of decline, destruction of the forest six years from now will total only 3.5 square km per year—the equivalent of half the area of Greater Rio de Janeiro.

Goldemberg said the decline was due to the ending of subsidies for large agricultural projects and to monitoring by IBAMA [Brazilian Institute For the Environment and Renewable Natural Resources]. In his opinion, that result gets Brazil off the hook as far as the international community is concerned and may enable it to obtain new loans.

The exact figures obtained by the INPE (with a margin of error of less than 5 percent) are seen as a Brazilian weapon in international negotiations. According to Goldemberg, the lack of surveys covering the deforested area led to international conjecture. In 1988, the World Bank even said that at the rate at which devastation was proceeding, Amazonia would disappear within a few years. According to the INPE's data, 90 percent of Amazonia is still intact.

Armed with that information, the Brazilian Government will be able to say that the burning of Amazon forests contributes less than 4 percent to the greenhouse effect. The total deforested area comes to 415,251 square kilometers, which is equivalent to the area of France.

Chile

Executive Sends Antiterrorist Law to Congress

PY1204024091 Santiago Radio Chilena Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] The executive branch submitted a package of measures to the legislative branch to amend Penal Code articles and proceedings to efficiently fight terrorism. The amendments include:

A. A set of rules on omissions, punishing people who know that a crime will be committed or has been committed and do not report it.

B. A set of rules on admitting reports by accomplices that might allow the informing terrorists to go free. These rules contemplate terrorists who leave the armed struggle, inform on other members, and obtain reductions of up to three degrees in the punishment for crimes they committed. The reduction will be decided by a judge who will rule on the matter based on the cooperation he received.

C. A set of rules on terrorists who continue their violent activity and are set to pay to the full requirement of the law and to repudiate the society which wishes to live in peace. Deputy Jose Antonio Viera Gallo explains:

[Begin Viera Gallo] I think that when circumstances are as serious as now, we are confronting a terrorist emergency and everyone must contribute as much as possible to fight terrorism. We cannot ask anyone to be a hero but society has the right to punish any person who, because of cowardice or indifference, withholds information that a crime will be committed. The same applies to anyone who does not cooperate with the law. [end recording]

Viera Gallo added that the people's defender that is created by the new draft bill will prevent police excesses against those suspected of being terrorists and will guarantee them proper defense. Viera Gallo said the legislation on terrorism is specifically aimed at defending democracy, human rights, and peaceful coexistence. The deputy emphatically denied that the new bill will transform the state in a police state. The draft bill attempts to combat terrorism of the ultraright as well as the ultraleft, Viera Gallo said.

Senator Defends Army Role in Antiterrorist Fight

PY1204025091 Santiago Radio Chilena Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] Senator Arturo Frei, member of the Senate defense commisssion, said today that the cooperation of the Armed Forces intelligence services does not mean that the Dina [National Intelligence Directorate] or the CNI [National Intelligence Center] will be reestablished.

Frei made these remarks after meeting with General Augusto Pinochet, Army commander in chief, at the Armed Forces building.

[Begin Frei recording] I want to make something clear. The participation, the cooperation of the intelligence services, does not mean the resurrection of the Dina or the CNI, not at all. All modern governments in the world have created intelligence services to fight subversion and terrorism. Chile cannot be an exception, particularly when they assassinate a senator. [end recording]

Frei said he visited the commander in chief to convey to him his opinions on terrorism because he will not be able to accept Pinochet's invitation to attend the ceremony at the War Academy tomorrow. Frei said that most Chileans want a peaceful transition to democracy and that good civilian-military relations are essential for that purpose. Frei said that the Armed Forces intelligence services must cooperate in fighting this scourge.

Asked if police are violating people's rights during their investigations by listening in on telephone conversations, Frei said that the government is totally honest when dealing with information.

[Begin Frei recording] It is important that information be handled legally, ethically, because terrorists seek notoriety, to appear on page one in newspapers, television, and radios. This is to play their game. [end recording]

Air Force Chief Offers Aid To Combat Terrorism

PY1104201491 Santiago Radio Chilena Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] Fernando Matthei, commander of the Chilean Air Force [FACh], has formally offered the aid of the Air Force to the government in the struggle to combat terrorism. Matthei met with Vice President Enrique Krauss.

General Matthei said following the meeting that the FACh cannot assist the government in intelligence work because it does not carry out this kind of activity. However, he said that the FACh has trained personnel such as drivers and security guards, and it has vehicles and tools.

The FACh commander added that the government should not be alone in waging the struggle against terrorism.

[Begin Matthei recording] We believe it is not enough to demand the government [to act]. We must all seek ways to help promote peaceful coexistence, democracy, and consensus in Chile so that we can become more united; so that people may look each other in the eye despite holding different points of view, which is perfectly natural. [end recording]

Matthei said that terrorism will fail if an atmosphere of consensus and mature discussions prevails. The FACh commander said: Terrorism is isolated and has no support but it can cause great harm.

Communists Asked To Clarify Stance on Terrorism

PCCh Answers PPD Charge

PY1104174591 Santiago Radio Nacional de Chile Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] The Communist Party of Chile [PCCh] has stated that the government has turned to the right because it

supports a democracy based on compromises and a slander campaign against the left, particularly against the sector headed by Volodia Teitelboim.

This was stated by PCCh Political Committee Gladys Marin who also challenged PPD [Party for Democracy] member Erich Schnake to disclose his sources of information that the PCCh is an ultra leftist party. She insists that the PCCh does not have ties with the Manuel Rodriguez Patriotic Front and that it opposes any terrorist action.

Marin also demands that Schnake should include former Dina [National Intelligence Directorate] chief Manuel Contreras [in his plea for a clarification on his ties with terrorists]. She added that Major General Luis Henriquez Riffo, the national defense chief of staff, is a former Dina member.

Socialists Support PPD Call

PY1204030891 Santiago Radio Nacional de Chile Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] Jorge Arrate, president of the Socialist Party of Chile [PSCh], has described as serious the ambiguity that the Communist Party of Chile [PCCh] has shown regarding terrorism. He added that he agrees with PPD [Party for Democracy] President Erich Schnake who urged the PCCh to rectify its position on this issue.

Arrate did admit, however, that the PCCh is undergoing a crisis; and, he said, it is natural for ambiguities to exist in this situation. He said: The PSCh does not want to interfere in PCCh internal affairs. It wants to hold a dialogue with PCCh.

[Begin Arrate recording] I believe that ambiguities will exist during any crisis similar to the one the PCCh is currenty experiencing. This is obvious and natural. But any ambiguity regarding the issue in question is serious. Therefore, the PSCh hopes that the PCCh will be able to overcome this crisis, will reinsert itself in the Chilean democratic process, and will fully uphold democracy and basic democratic principles without any ambiguities. [end recording]

Asked about a recent statement made by PPD President Erich Schnake who has urged the PCCh to submit any available information to the government in view of its ties with the Manuel Rodriguez Patriotic Front, Jorge Arrate said that this call must apply to all sectors. He added that all organizations, political parties, and citizens in general have the moral duty to hand over any information that may be helpful in combatting terrorism.

The PSCh president said that in view of the current national situation, all political parties, both in government and in the opposition, must seek a consensus on all issues. He explained that the PSCh will fulfill its role in the struggle against terrorism.

Asked whether he believes PCCh Secretary General Volodia Teitelboim when he says that the PCCh opposes violence and seeks its full reinsertion in the democratic process, Arrate categorically asserted: I believe Volodia. I have known him for many years.

Call for Clarity Reiterated

PY1104233491 Santiago Radio Chilena Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] Sergio Bitar, secretary general of the Party for Democracy [PPD], said that the country is going through critical times because it must decide how are we going to confront terrorism in a democracy. Bitar said that any agency created for this purpose must be subordinate to civilian authority. Bitar added that today we cannot use the methods that were effective in fighting subversion, and he added that all efforts must be directed at increasing the population's security.

[Begin Bitar recording] We perceive that we are going through a very critical period in our transition because we have to decide how democracy will confront terrorism. This is completely different from the way dictatorships deal with antisubversive wars. We believe we have to seriously ponder how democracy will confront terrorism. [end recording]

Bitar said that, to help stabilize democracy, the Communist Party should clarify all its ambiguous positions on violence. Bitar said that the disagreements between both political sectors must end and that the Communist Party must join the political pact that was proposed by the government to face terrorism.

Bitar made these remarks when talking about Chile's foreign policy, which in his opinion must be modernized.

[Begin Bitar recording] In our opinion the country's foreign policy must be based on a multiparty agreement. This issue deals with the national interest and should not be used for sensationalist declarations each time we have an international problem. [end recording]

Bitar said that Chile's foreign policy appears to be dispersed and without a clear and defined objective. Bitar said that the free trade agreement with the United States is strategic and requires serious and in-depth national debate.

FPMR Members' Statements in Spain Investigated

PY1004221091 Santiago Television Nacional de Chile Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Text] Acting Interior Minister Enrique Correa terms worrisome the statements made by members of the Manuel Rodriguez Patriotic Front [FPMR] in Spain. He said that this morning the Chilean Government asked the Chilean ambassador to Spain to submit a report on this matter so that the appropriate measures may be taken.

[Begin recording] [Correa] These individuals escaped from prison in January 1990 before we took power; nevertheless, we are worried about the news conference they gave about their pending arrest warrant, and because they talked to the press in Spain when the Chilean president is visiting that country. We do not like this situation.

[Reporter] [Question indistinct]?

[Correa] We have asked the Foreign Ministry to take immediate action.

[Reporter] [Question indistinct]

[Correa] We have to learn about their situation in Spain. We are taking the same steps other governments have taken. First, the Foreign Ministry asked the respective ambassador for information. This information helps to clear up the situation. [end recording]

Official Policy on Ties With Cuba Reiterated

PY1204025491 Santiago Radio Nacional de Chile Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Excerpt] Acting Interior Minister Enrique Correa has reasserted the Chilean Government's adherence to the principles of nonintervention and the self-determination of nations. This is why, he said, we will verify that Cuba fully upholds these principles before making any decision.

Correa made this statement in view of questions posed in Spain to President Aylwin on why Chile has not yet resumed ties with Cuba. Asked about this and if there is information that Cuba is supporting Chilean terrorist groups, Correa said:

[Begin Correa recording] The president said that while we do not have specific guarantees that this is not the case [words indistinct] diplomatic ties with Cuba. This does not mean that Chile is making charges against Cuba. What we are saying is that we want to have specific evidence showing that Cuba is not meddling in Chilean affairs. [end recording] [passage omitted]

* FPMR Leader on Objectives, Rettig Report

91SM0249C Santiago LA NACION in Spanish 9 Mar 91 p 9

[Report by Jaime Valdes on a written interview with a Manuel Rodriguez Patriotic Front (FPMR) leader identified as Nicolas Fuentes: "The FPMR Denies It Threatened Justices"; date not given]

[Text] Santiago—The armed group Manuel Rodriguez Patriotic Front (FPMR) has declared that it did not threaten the lives of the justices of the Supreme Court. "The FPMR has never made a practice of issuing threats," contended a member of the national leadership, who identified himself as Nicolas Fuentes, in written answers to a questionnaire submitted by LA NACION.

He also denied that his organization planned the "Balanza" [scales] and "Capa y Espada" [cloak-and-dagger] operations that were supposed to take the lives of the magistrates. Nor was it responsible, he said, for the murder of Dr. Carlos Perez Castro, who was an Army major, and his wife at Rancagua.

[LA NACION] The Carabineros say that a plan by the FPMR to kill the justices of the Supreme Court went up in smoke. What is the Front's story?

[Fuentes] We have absolutely no knowledge of this fabrication, which we found out about through press reports on "Operation Balanza" and "Operation Capa y Espada." We never designed those operations, and we know no more than what has been published. It is our contention that this is a stage in the evolution toward national dignity. For that there must be real truth and justice. To the extent that justice is done in this country, our actions will become unnecessary.

[LA NACION] It has also been said that you intend to attack senior officers of the Armed Forces.

[Fuentes] We have made no plans against senior officers. We have made plans against torturers and murderers.

[LA NACION] With regard to the death of Dr. Carlos Perez Castro, which occurred at Rancagua, do you claim responsibility for that action, since he was reportedly "sentenced" some time ago?

[Fuentes] We did not participate in the action at Rancagua. In that operation, Perez Castro was executed for being a well-known torturer. Then they killed his wife. We have never advocated the murder of innocent people, and the times we have done so, we have acknowledged that. In this specific case, we did not participate in that action. It does not follow our pattern. We are not going to take action against wives and children. The Front's armed action is not indiscriminate. It pursues political ends.

[LA NACION] The doctor had been threatened by you....

[Fuentes] The Front has never made a practice of issuing threats. It is untrue that we are sending out lists threatening doctors. We never sent a list threatening anyone, nor will we do so. And just as we officially denied that the "Balanza" and "Capa y Espada" operations were planned by our National Directorate, we also deny that our organization carried out the action at Rancagua.

[LA NACION] What is the FPMR's position on the death of the carabinero Osvaldo Reyes Reyes and the subsequent arrest of three alleged members of the Front with a large amount of materiel?

[Fuentes] We do not know the details of the death of the carabinero Reyes Reyes. The group that supposedly carried out that operation has no relation to us. So again, the only thing we know is what has come out in the press. It has provided extensive coverage on actions for which the Front is blamed. We have also read an alleged statement by one of our local officials in Talca. Along with the alleged plans they are attributing to us, this is all part of a psychological operation to discredit us.

[LA NACION] Is it true that some groups are acting independently within the Front?

[Fuentes] It is public knowledge that the FPMR was part of the Communist Party [PC] until 1987. After July, the main group of the FPMR, due to political disagreements with the PC leadership, split off. This schism took place in secrecy. The discussion could not be carried out among all of the membership. It became more open when the PC was legalized.

As a result, there are still sectors that are carrying out actions in the name of the FPMR. It does not bother us. The more "Manolos" there are taking action, the better. We do not consider ourselves the exclusive owners of the name or of revolutionary action. What we do want, however, is for the actions of all those groups you call "independent" to fall within the framework of revolutionary action, not terrorist action, not lumpenesque action, which does nothing to credit the name of Manuel Rodriguez or the name of our organization.

[LA NACION] What is the current status of the FPMR?

[Fuentes] The Front is now going through a very interesting stage in its history, within the context of what we have designated the first national consultation. The initial phase of discussion has already been completed. More than 100 leading cadres, chiefs, and historic militants participated from the north to the south, in prison, abroad, in work with the masses, in military work. That is, in all our structures.

Rettig Report

[LA NACION] What is your opinion of the Rettig Report?

[Fuentes] We believe that from the standpoint of the tasks that the government assigned to the Commission, the report is quite good. Unfortunately, not all of the truth has come out, only part of it. The government has files containing the names of all the murderers and torturers. Those documents should be made known to the public. The people have a right to know who has been allowed impunity.

[LA NACION] Will you continue the actions that you call "executions"?

[Fuentes] We believe that doing justice is not an ad hoc matter. Doing justice should be an ongoing effort in Chile. So the executions are not specific plans of ours. The Front's action is aimed at political objectives, and today, justice is needed by our people. That is why we are acting. If there were justice in this country, obviously we would not have to carry it out, and we would immediately erase that type of action from our lexicon.

* Lower House Comments on Human Rights Report

91SM0249B Santiago EL MERCURIO in Spanish 8 Mar 91 p C2

[Text] Valparaiso—The Chamber of Deputies, in a unanimous vote of all members present, agreed to heed the president's call to deal promptly with the various legal initiatives corresponding to the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report, as well as the bills involved in the modernization of the administration of justice.

In yesterday's regular session, the Chamber approved the following draft agreement:

1. To express its appreciation for the seriousness, zeal, efficiency, and thoroughness of the work done by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission for the sake of truth and reconciliation among Chileans.

2. To heed the president's call to deal promptly with the various legal initiatives corresponding to the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report, especially those aimed at vindicating and restoring the honor of those whose human rights were violated. In addition, this honorable Chamber expresses its desire to deal promptly with the bills involving the modernization of the administration of justice, seeking broad agreements.

3. To call upon all sectors to reflect on their own responsibilities for the events whose revelation is having such a great impact on us today, and upon all Chileans to give serious and careful thought to those events, rejecting any purpose other than truth and justice. In this way, we will help heal the wounds of the past and will be able to continue our progress toward the restoration and consolidation of democratic coexistence.

4. To reaffirm its hope that the judiciary will thoroughly investigate the criminal acts detailed in the Commission's report, in accordance with current legislation and in compliance with its unavoidable constitutional duty.

5. To announce to the public that the honorable Chamber will study the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report and will debate its contents in a special session to be convened soon for that purpose."

* Legislators Informally Assess Aylwin's Cabinet

91SM0249A Santiago EL MERCURIO in Spanish 10 Mar 91 pp D7-D8

[Report by Maria Angelica de Luigi; first paragraph is EL MERCURIO introduction]

[Excerpts] It was the best time to do this report. Back from vacation, the legislators were relaxed, jocular, and talkative. Especially the ladies, who wasted no time in casting a very feminine glance at the president's men. [passage omitted]

Parliamentary Chorus

Our survey revealed some unanimous opinions very quickly: a seven for the economic team, with votes from left to right; a chorus of voices proclaiming Enrique Correa "nicest minister" ("he is just everything that is nice," repeated members of parliament of all stripes); the booby prize to Mining Minister Juan Hamilton: "a bore, a drag, overbearing"....

And the most intelligent? Enrique Correa, again; Edgardo Boeninger and Ricardo Lagos.

The most willing to listen to criticism: Cortazar (Labor), Etchegaray (Housing), and Enrique Correa again. The least willing to listen: Jorge Jimenez (Health), Alejandro Foxley (Finance), and Gierman Correa (Transportation).

The most timid: Jaime Toha (Energy), Cortazar (Labor), and Francisco Cumplido (Justicia).

Those who will need to be replaced: the foreign minister, so that "a minister with more *pizzazz* and more verve can be put in"; Minister Patricio Rojas (the vote was divided between ruling party members and opposition members); and the health minister, who drew criticism on all sides for his "weak leadership."

Which ministers are girding for presidential candidacies? Lagos, "the big name being pushed by the Socialists"; Foxley, whom many see as the dauphin of the Christian Democrats; and ...Sergio Molina, who was described by various congressmen as "the candidate of the Aylwin family."

Who Is in Charge?

Another unanimous opinion was reflected in the response to the question of who runs the government. "President Aylwin is directly in charge of the household." And "he is doing it well," agreed legislators of the Independent Democratic Union (UDI), National Renewal (RN), the Socialist Party (PS), the Party for Democracy (PPD), and the Christian Democratic Party (PDC). Everyone said he is "moderate, deliberate, equable, representative of the whole country, intelligent."

Quite a bit more than most people expected.

For example, a rightist senator said: "A year ago I feared he would run a government that was inefficient on the economic front and demagogic on the social front." Said another: "The truth is that we feared he would respond very weakly to the pressure of the political parties."

A PDC legislator: "I thought he might be indecisive. His energy has surprised me."

A Socialist: "Sure, we had our doubts at first. We were afraid he would suffer from the characteristic sectarianism of the PDC. He has proved that he does not."

In short, in the view of all those interviewed, Aylwin has come through his first year with flying colors.

Every legislator, however, seems to have his own idea of who is the power behind the throne. Who is the most powerful minister?

A Christian Democrat: "There is no doubt that it is Minister Boeninger. He is closest to the president, closer than Enrique Correa, for one basic reason: Aylwin and Boeninger share the same political ideology."

A Socialist: "Enrique Correa is the man with the most power. Although Boeninger shares the same ideology with the president, Correa shares his religious beliefs. We must not forget that Boeninger is the only Christian Democrat who does not take communion at the chapel at La Moneda, and that Correa, who is a man of the [Catholic] Church, is the only Socialist who does."

Another Socialist: "I think that the power is shared by the Correa-Boeninger-Krauss troika. Each of them makes his contribution, and the three together are a very serious thing."

An RN deputy: "It seems to me that Boeninger is the general, Enrique Correa is the captain, and Krauss is the sergeant."

A legislator of the UDI: "I think that Boeninger is the one who draws up the general plan and Correa is the one who executes it."

Another Christian Democrat: "The one in charge is Krauss. I see Krauss's hand more than Boeninger's in the measures taken on fundamental issues such as human rights, the judiciary, and the Armed Forces. We must not forget that Boeninger is the great negotiator and Krauss is the most decisive and energetic of the three. And the one most willing to compromise is Enrique Correa."

A Christian Democrat: "None of the three is in charge. The men closest to the president, his most trusted aides, whom he never fails to consult, are Minister Juan Hamilton, his brother Andres Aylwin, and Bishop Carlos Gonzalez."

Correa the Nice

Minister Enrique Correa took first prize in a number of areas.

The PS congressmen are charmed by this "Socialist who has become the right-hand man of a Christian Democratic president." And they are not surprised: "The paunchy Correa has always been behind the scenes, negotiating, pulling strings, solving problems. He is a great strategist."

For those on the right, in contrast, it was a "revelation": "You understand," confided an opposition senator, "since Enrique Correa was not politically prominent, I did not know anything about him before he joined the government. And when I saw him, I commented, 'My God, he looks just like a man from Popular Unity (UP). What will he do?' But now it turns out that he is the most genial, upright, cordial, gentlemanly, discreet, extremely intelligent man...and now I could not even begin to categorize him. You know, in general, all these ministers are so agreeable that you have to ask yourself, could they be hiding something?"

A Christian Democrat says: "He is also a genial minister, a great negotiator who is showing the country the new face of renewed socialism."

The Gloomy Foreign Relations Ministry

Enrique Silva Cimma, on the other hand, fared very badly in this assessment of his performance. Dull, gloomy, lifeless, and boring were some of the adjectives used by the legislators to describe him. Among Socialists, he is criticized because "the country has not launched any initiative of international standing; it has not taken advantage of the excellent impression Chile has made on the rest of the world. We have missed an opportunity." He is acknowledged to be a "civic man, devoted to public service," but "without the stature of a foreign minister."

Christian Democrats are the first to challenge him. Some PDC congressmen contend that "he is failing to make good use of the team of able diplomatic professionals led by the (Christian Democratic) undersecretary."

RN legislators, in contrast, find excuses for the minister. "The problem is, the PDC has assembled a parallel team, headed by the undersecretary, which boycotts him." Another opposition legislator said that "the minister is anxious to do things right," but his team "is undergoing a serious struggle between the Radicals and the Christian Democrats." As for his appointments, they say that "Silva Cimma has only been able to comply with the political quotas imposed on him from above."

Obviously, though, there is also resentment in the opposition as a result of "an international policy, especially in the beginning, of going around the world asking everyone's forgiveness, which was a diplomatic blunder."

The Surprise: Ominami

The young minister of the economy, Carlos Ominami, is "the surprise" of the cabinet.

Especially for the right. "I consider him an excellent minister," says a senator of that persuasion. "I never imagined a man from the Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR) could be like that." A UDI deputy adds, "When we were debating the Fishing Law, a colleague nudged me and said, 'Close your eyes. Does it not seem like you are listening to an economist from Chicago?'"

In the Socialists' view, Ominami "is dynamic; he has dignity; he expresses himself to public opinion very articulately." They feel that he is a great representative of the new, modern socialism, although "all of a sudden, he may seem a little too modern to us, rather than conservative."

The PPD congressmen consider him a good minister, although for them, "he is a Socialist, not PPD."

And the Christian Democrats describe him as "a good minister who fits in well with Foxley's team."

Foxley: Impeccable

The finance minister got very good marks. The Socialists, however, thought that "he took a nasty fall" when he showed inflexibility in the effort to find an immediate solution to the problem of retirees. PPD legislators add that "we told him in no uncertain terms that the problem could not be put off, but he proved to be rather pigheaded." Leftist congressmen also find him, on a personal level, "very concerned with his image."

On the right, they say that the minister's performance has been "impeccable." They say he is "straightforward, open, not sectarian at all." And they congratulate him for keeping inflation in control and persisting in achieving good macroeconomic results. A UDI legislator says: "If he keeps this up, he could even be a good candidate for the right...(?) In any case, he would have been a very good finance minister for us."

A Christian Democrat says, "Foxley is the star of the cabinet."

Rojas: Stubbornness

The adjectives used to describe the defense minister include tough, stubborn, boring, tense, musty, inflexible, slow. It is curious, in his case, to hear different opinions among his PDC colleages in the legislature. Some say, "He has already served his purpose in standing up to the Armed Forces. Now he should be replaced: Begin a second phase of better relations, for which Rojas, given his stubbornness, is ill suited." Others, in contrast, would not remove him "for anything, not for any reason, because that would give pleasure to Pinochet."

Some Socialists sympathize with Minister Patricio Rojas: "When the jobs were distributed, he got the ugliest dance partner," they comment. Others feel that "he has not had much prominence because in fact the president has been directly in charge of relations with the military." PPD legislators defend him: "Minister Rojas is a man of great devotion and loyalty to Aylwin."

Rightist congressmen acknowledge that Rojas is "a victim of the circumstances.... It is obvious that General Pinochet, after 16 years as president, does not want to deal with the defense minister, no matter who he is ...." But they add that he has demonstrated "a confrontational attitude, very little tolerance in the delicate relations with the Armed Forces." A UDI deputy opined, "He has been the worst of the ministers for this transition."

Cumplido: Tireless

Minister Cumplido is well liked by all members of Congress, despite the battles over the laws that bear his name.

Several Socialists and PPD legislators say: "Extraordinary, honest. He obviously has a desire for justice. He works tirelessly, and he does not try to steal the show. Has anyone ever seen him mugging for the cameras?"

Christian Democrats call him "serious, professional, conciliatory."

The minister of justice is considered by all to be the "hardest working" by far, as he practically lived at Congress last year, trying to get his famous laws passed. It is not for nothing that he is known as "Deputy No. 121" in the Chamber.

Rightist legislators first point out Cumplido's virtues: "He is an academic, a devout Christian, very responsive." Then they criticize him: "He made a big mistake on the bill on political prisoners and penalties for terrorist acts. The problem is, the minister tends to write legislation that reflects a personal, very impractical position."

Krauss the German

In general, deputies of all stripes feel that the interior minister is one of the ministers most willing to engage in dialogue. He is very accessible, and he appreciates a good joke.

On the right, however, Enrique Krauss's actions have not been well received, and are described as "very unfortunate, lightweight." They say the minister is "half German" (as

evidenced by his "German joke" about Colonia Dignidad). A UDI legislator commented: "He is nice, he has done a good job. But he has a tendency to talk too much. He says things like that bit about the cowboys (what he actually said was, "As minister it is not my job to play the part of sheriff"), causing you to ask yourself, 'Am I really hearing this? Is the minister of the interior really saying this?'"

The Socialists, on the other hand, like his style. One of them asserted, "Fortunately, he is not a serious type, and he does not take this business of being minister of the interior too seriously. After so many hardliners in that post in the previous regime, it is a relief to have this minister who runs off at the mouth and likes to joke around."

A PPD legislator said, "it would have been unthinkable to have a tough and grim interior minister during the transition." Moreover, leftists also praise "his willingness to meet with and listen to all the sectors that are in conflict."

A Christian Democrat, in contrast, would prefer that Krauss "be more of a political leader in the cabinet."

Boeninger: Pure and Cold

A Socialist says of the minister secretary general of the presidency: "Boeninger operates at the purest level of politics." Another feels that "Boeninger is a cold engineer of politics."

The right regards him as the great architect of "what could have been an abortion: the power sharing of Socialists and Christian Democrats." They see him silently and methodically weaving together, "in the Development Studies Center (CED), long before he became part of the government, these Socialist-Christian Democratic duos and troikas in the ministries of Finance, Economy, Labor, Interior, the General Secretariat of the Government and the General Secretariat of the Presidency.... And no one can deny that he wove a fine tapestry." "I think Boeninger is a genius," said an RN deputy.

The Socialists congratulate him for the same thing: "He was able to stifle the inherent sectarianism of the PDC and to make this marriage with us work. He is the man who designed the strategy of the Coalition [Concertacion]."

Lagos: The Most Political

The Socialist and PPD deputies are unstinting in their praise for Ricardo Lagos's work. The latter feel that "Lagos is the only truly PPD minister." "It used to be unimaginable that he would hold that post," explained one legislator. "There was fear that, because of his political ambitions, he would become an unruly opponent of President Aylwin. Nevertheless, he has managed to lower his profile as a scrappy politician and enhance his image as a great minister of education."

The Christian Democrats who were interviewed did not criticize Lagos, but they did not praise him excessively, either. They deemed him "a good minister," although one commented that "he is still a difficult man who is much taken with himself."

Rightists, on the other hand, take their hats off to him "as an intelligent, able, talented man who is capable of deep thinking...even if you do not share his ideas." One RN deputy said, "He has proved that he can be diplomatic and flexible, despite his innate vehemence."

Several others on the right added that Lagos is a "disturbing and dangerous minister, the architect of a very subtle, ideologized policy that may have an impact by winning over teachers who are shaping our future generations."

"He is a very intelligent fifth column who is affecting education policy," commented several others in the opposition. "He is the most political and most socialist minister of the cabinet, although he cannot be accused of deriving political gain from his post."

Even the opposition recognizes, however, that "Lagos has demonstrated a great knowledge of educational issues.... I have seen him expound on the Educational Statute with such authority that few dared to contradict him," said a UDI legislator.

Bad Grades for Jimenez

Another member of the cabinet who did poorly in this assessment by the legislative branch was the minister of health.

Some Socialists said, "The management of this very critical social sector has been weak. Practically nothing has happened there." Some complained "that the minister has been unable to engage in a meaningful dialogue with health workers." Others explain that the problems are due to "the fact that the minister has not had enough resources and is hampered by the budget that Finance gives him."

Christian Democrats: "The minister has made a great effort to deal with primary health care, but much remains to be done."

Rightists: "Jorge Jimenez is an excellent person, a good doctor, but it is undeniable that his performance has not met the expectations people had regarding health problems." An RN deputy added, "He has surrounded himself with a team of Christian Democrats that is ideologized and arrogant, and is not known for its technical medical background."

Cortazar: The Bookworm

All agree that the labor minister got stuck with "the third most difficult ministry." But some are pleased with Cortazar's performance (and with the "very accessible" duo he makes with his Socialist undersecretary Eduardo Loyola).

Many describe Cortazar as a "bookworm," in addition to being one of the most timid of the ministers.

The Socialists say he has performed "well, with brilliance, flexibility, and a willingness to listen to both labor and management."

Rightists say he is "very intelligent," although they emphasize that "his original reform program had to be corrected in the Senate."

Etchegaray: Cheering and Booing

The housing minister has charmed the Socialists: "One of the best," declares a PS congressman, adding that of the ministers, he is one who "most often goes to the land, who talks to people the most, who tours towns and listens attentively to people's problems." Etchegaray also has another merit, in the view of the deputies: He is the only minister who, every time he comes to a district, invites all the deputies (both opposition and ruling parties) to accompany him and talk to local residents.

Several Christian Democrats are concerned that "although a great effort is being made in this ministry, we cannot see a clear, decisive formula for dealing with the housing shortage."

Rightists feel that "the housing minister is an excellent person, but he has not done anything. The management of that ministry is inefficient." UDI legislators find his program "erratic," but "at least he has taken the technical aspect seriously and has not succumbed to demagogic solutions."

Transportation: Barbed Wire

Transportation Minister German Correa, a Socialist, is given sympathetic treatment by legislators across the political spectrum: "He was assigned the second-ugliest dance partner," say some, while others add, "He is sitting on barbed wire." This because, to resolve the sticky problem of urban transport, "he has had to do battle with the most touchy and difficult trade unions...."

Those who criticize him say "he has been caving in under pressure." "He started out very enthusiastically," says a Christian Democrat, "but now they are twisting his arm pretty easily."

Those who praise him emphasize the fact tht he "has taken vigorous action and has seized the bull by the horns."

On the right, the former leader of the most orthodox Socialists, those of the Almeyda faction, is regarded as "another pleasant revelation." They feel that he has proceeded "without ideologizing." Although he has made mistakes under pressure, they say he is "a man of courage and valor, who has acted without regard for the political costs that his decisions might entail for him personally." They also assert, however, that "he has gradually become weaker and softer."

Figueroa: A Good Attorney

All the congressmen believe that the Radical Juan Agustin Figueroa is "irrelevant" as head of the farm sector. "As minister of agriculture, he is an excellent criminal lawyer," commented several people. Many admitted, however, that the minister has plunged into his task, and that "in this initial period he has made a conscientious effort to become familiar with the sector."

But the Socialists consider this "an ineffectual ministry where nothing has happened." Christian Democrats say the same thing.

Hamilton: A Candidate

Many of the legislators who were interviewed did not have a favorable opinion of the minister of mining. Not only did they award him the title of "most boring," but they had other comments as well.

PS and PPD congressmen said: "He does not have any interest in being a minister. His ambition is to run for the Senate in Region V."

A Christian Democrat said that "the problem is that this is not the right ministry for Hamilton. He would do fine at the Interior Ministry."

An RN legislator opined: "I see him as conceited, arrogant, a man who will not accept criticism."

"They Do Not Matter"

The harshest judgment ("the ministers who do not matter") is reserved for the ministries rather than the individuals. The politicians in Congress are not very excited, for example, about the National Resources Ministry. "I am not familiar with him," say rightist legislators when asked about Socialist Minister Luis Alvarado. But the members of his own party emphasize that "he has gotten that ministry back on its feet after its collapse."

And Christian Democrats express anger: "He is the most politically sectarian minister. He wants to run his ministry with nothing but Socialists."

No one has any criticism for Minister of Public Works Carlos Hurtado, in contrast: "He is talented, he gets things done," commented a Christian Democrat. And on the right: "a very well-trained, intelligent man, and a good executive."

A good note on which to end this congressional evaluation of "the good, the bad, and the ugly" of President Aylwin's cabinet.

Colombia

Decree Offers More Guarantees to Extraditables

PA1204001191 Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 1745 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] Here in Bogota the government is preparing a new state of siege decree that will expedite the transfer of evidence held in the United States against Colombians who surrender to local authorities, precisely so that they are not extradited and thereby avail themselves of the benefits of reduced sentences.

This will be one of the advantages that Pablo Escobar will have upon his surrender to the Colombian justice system. Concerning the guarantees available to the well-known cartel chief and his family, our reporter Almircar Hernandez has interviewed Justice Minister Jaime Giraldo.

[Begin recording] [Hernandez] The legal provisions that guarantee non-extradition, reduced sentences, and personal protection are ready and in force. Whenever Pablo Escobar decides to surrender to the authorities, he needs

only to communicate this decision to one of his confidants. Cinevision has learned that once Escobar makes this decision, the government and the department of criminal proceedings have aircraft, helicopters, boats, and bullet-proof vehicles ready and waiting to travel to any part of the nation where Pablo Escobar may choose to turn himself in to Colombian authorities. Under a special disposition that guarantees his personal safety, the Medellin cartel chief would be taken to the Itagui jail. There at the Itagui jail a cell is waiting for him, adjoining the one occupied by the Ochoa brothers. The security measures, however, are not just for Pablo Escobar. They extend also to his relatives, who would be granted special guarantees.

[Giraldo] If anyone feels particularly threatened, he will be able to request adequate protection. There is no reason to think that they will find themselves in a dangerous situation, but if this is the case, such persons would have the right to request the protection they may consider necessary and the authorities would then take the appropriate measures.

[Hernandez] What human rights guarantees have you mentioned for those cases, and specifically for Pablo Escobar?

[Giraldo] The human rights guarantees would be: the guaranteed right of defense; guaranteed seclusion completely safe from anyone who may wish to intrude, violently or surreptitiously; guaranteed justice and timely defense; and all the guarantees that the state must grant to every Colombian citizen.

[Hernandez] What steps are involved in the new state of siege decree to obtain evidence from the U.S. Government....

[Giraldo, interrupting] A new state of siege decree is being drawn up to modify the internal procedure for evidence to be used in a trial. Currently the procedure goes through the superior court, which in turn gives official notice to the judges. Now we have elaborated on a direct mechanism from the U.S. Attorney General's Office straight to the Presidency's Legal Office and from there to the judges.

[Hernandez] Now it is all up to Pablo Escobar Gaviria, whose surrender to Colombia authorities would unquestionably contribute to the nation's pacification. [end recording]

Church Admits Failure as Mediator in Talks

PA1204021291 Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 0005 GMT 12 Apr 91

[Text] The church mediators today reported the failure of their efforts and recommended that guerrilla groups deal directly with the government. The church mediators had established a 40-day deadline to produce results, but the lack of communication between the government and the Simon Bolivar National Guerrilla Coordinating Board [CNG] is such that the mediators did not need 40 days to realize that they were wasting their time.

Government Minister Humberto De la Calle Lombana referred to the communique and said that the government is willing to explore the possibilities of a direct dialogue with the guerrilla groups.

Consequently, the mediation that the National Constituent Assembly asked the church to carry out between the government and the CNG concluded today.

[Begin Father Fernando Sabogal recording] The CNG demands were unacceptable for the government, and the sites and guarantees offered by the government were not trusted by the CNG. At this point, we believe that it is appropriate to explain this situation to the country and to end the mediating role that had been requested of us. We deplore the new national frustration, but we believe all is not lost. [end recording]

The mediators, who had accepted the request on 7 March, sent a letter to the government ending their mission before the approach of the 40-day deadline that they had established. They believe that their mediation has been useless and fruitless.

Ecuador

* TSE Favors Simplified Balloting in 1992

91SM0244E Guayaquil EL UNIVERSO in Spanish 4 Mar 91 p 16

[Text] Quito—Dr. Carlos Pardo Montiel, spokesman for the Supreme Election Tribunal (TSE), says voting must be simplified in the 1992 elections, when the people will choose a new president and vice president, national and provincial deputies, mayors, council members, provincial prefects, councilmen, and municipal council heads.

By law, every voter must vote on seven different ballots, a real problem since voters generally mark two or three and leave the rest, thereby leaving a large number of votes blank for the various elective offices to be filled.

Simplifying Voting

He said voting must be simplified and the number of ballots reduced, for which purpose he has proposed that the court's legal commission pass a number of reforms aimed at creating a single ballot with the list of provincial deputies and councilmen and council members from each party.

Such a ballot would list the names of the three leading candidates for each of the posts, retaining the other ballots for the other elective offices.

This would eliminate two ballots, so that voters in the 1992 elections would use only five!

Worrisome Problems

The problems that arise every four years are worrisome and should be solved once and for all by the National Congress, Pardo Montiel says.

He suggests that in order to avoid the problem of so many ballots, elections for the offices of mayor and prefect should be held halfway through the presidential term, so that voters in presidential elections could mark one ballot for president and vice president, another for national deputies, and another for provincial deputies and for councilmen and council members.

The following term—that is, two years after the president is elected—elections could be held for mayor or council president, using one ballot, with another for prefects and a third for councilmen and council members and provincial deputies.

Reform

The specific reform proposed is Article 59 of the election law, proposing elimination of the two ballots as described.

* PSC President on Party Changes, Elections

91SM0244D Quito LA OTRA in Spanish
28 Feb 91 pp 16-20

[Interview with Social Christian Party (PSC) president Jaime Nebot by Jimmy Jairala at a Quito hotel on 20 February; first two paragraphs are LA OTRA introduction]

[Text] The interview with Deputy Jaime Nebot Saadi was arranged on Monday, 18 February, shortly after he was named the new national president of the Social Christian Party. The date and place: 0930 on Wednesday, 20 February, at Quito's Hotel Oro Verde. A steady flow of questions concerned his internal struggle with architect Sixto Duran-Ballen to be the presidential nominee for List 6. Coincidentally, at 1800 the previous evening, the former mayor of Quito had resigned after 40 years of membership. With minor variations, questions continued to revolve around the candidate—he ran twice for the highest office of the land—who had announced his retirement from politics.

Nebot no longer has a temporary residence in the apartment building overlooking the Churchill Monument. He now goes back and forth between the Colon and Oro Verde hotels, where he has set up centers of operations in the capital. Our chat began in the corridor of the luxurious Oro Verde, where he had arrived just before leader Nicolas Lapentti, along with other party leaders. Also present was the brand-new secretary of the PSC, Pascual del Cioppo. Pre-election fever was in the air.

[LA OTRA] Do you recall that five years ago, you were the first person interviewed by the newspaper LA OTRA when you were governor of Guayas?

[Nebot Saadi] I remember it very well. That was with Marcelo Marchan.

[LA OTRA] Do you recall that when they asked you about a possible run for the presidency, you responded, "Me? President? You must be crazy!"

[Nebot Saadi] At the time, I was referring to the 1988 candidacy. It would have been insane.

[LA OTRA] Time has passed and the possibility of a third party in presidential elections is virtually a reality. The way has been cleared within your party now that the contender, Sixto Duran-Ballen, has announced his resignation and retreat to his winter quarters. How do Nebot and Social Christians feel about the loss of the member holding Card No. 002?

[Nebot Saadi] I am sorry it occurred. We do not think there is any reason for him to have made such a decision but, inasmuch as it is an individual decision, we must respect and accept it. The party's doors are always open to that gentleman and friend, but the party is now a political machine that marches inexorably toward victory in 1992 in order to take power, not as a goal in itself, but rather, as a means of serving all Ecuadorans, of changing them and improving their standard of living, particularly of the poorest people. In that struggle, individuals are not important; only goals. Once it was Camilo Ponce, now it is Duran-Ballen, and tomorrow Febres-Cordero or Nebot will disappear. What will not disappear is the presence of a people in need of solutions to their problems.

[LA OTRA] Precandidates have always refused to accept their status as such, deferring to a "party decision," but with Sixto gone, can there be any doubt?

[Nebot Saadi] I will say what all precandidates say: The Social Christian Party must—at the right time, but also because it must be that way, in a timely and democratic manner—decide the name of the candidates for president and vice president because we shall run alone, without alliances. Running alone, we can repeat the victory of 1990 in 1992.

[LA OTRA] There has been speculation about a ticket of Nebot for president, Leon Febres-Cordero for mayor of Guayaquil, and Sixto for mayor of Quito. Why did Duran-Ballen not accept it?

[Nebot Saadi] Well, Febres-Cordero had already decided to give up his peace and quiet, to which he was fully entitled, and return to active political activity. Guayaquil wants him to be mayor, but the decision does not depend on him. As for Duran-Ballen, when I went to his house, I made it very clear. I told him that if he and I were after the same thing, we should compete democratically within the party. If that was not what he wanted, I said the party would always respect his place. We did not discuss anything more specific, although I think that was fairly specific!

[LA OTRA] Did you ever talk about a Duran-Ballen/Nebot team?

[Nebot Saadi] Above and beyond the fact that it is the candidate for president who decides who will be on the ticket and that when Duran-Ballen was the candidate for president, he never made me any such offer, I am personally not interested in being a vice-presidential candidate for anyone!

[LA OTRA] Because of vanity?

[Nebot Saadi] I do not believe in candidacies born of vanity, exhaustion, family, or partisan trios. I believe circumstances make the candidate.

[LA OTRA] If you still do not admit that you are "already" the candidate, at least do you think you are "the man" who meets the requirements?

[Nebot Saadi] If you ask me whether Jaime Nebot meets the conditions for winning the elections, I would say I do. If you ask me whether I, along with a team of capable Social Christians and independents, can solve the country's problems, I would also say I can.

[LA OTRA] Do you believe in endorsing votes? If Leon Febres-Cordero is a candidate for mayor of Guayaquil, will those votes also go to support the List 6 candidate for the presidency?

[Nebot Saadi] I think that one wins on the strength of his own votes. The presence of a strong team helps improve the possibility of success, but that business about endorsements.... Just think about Assad Bucaram at the height of his power, when he could not secure the post of councilman of Guayas for one of his sons. I do not believe in endorsements.

[LA OTRA] What kind of a candidate would Duran-Ballen have been for the Social Christian Party?

[Nebot Saadi] If you do not mind, I would prefer to answer by saying I do not like to speculate. He has already been a candidate. I think the country was mistaken not to vote for him, but the fact remains he lost. What would have happened now with him as candidate? I really do not know.

[LA OTRA] And what kind of a candidate would Sixto be outside of the party, in another camp?

[Nebot Saadi] I am a person who answers for himself, for what I can do. We do not engage in politics "against," much less against him. We respect everyone, but we fear no one. Our confrontation is for the purpose of implementing our positions from inside the government in order to help the people. We are not concerned about any candidate.

[LA OTRA] How much damage can be done to the PSC by Duran-Ballen's resignation, inasmuch as he undeniably enjoyed support inside and out? I would cite one case: Manabi, where former Minister Marcelo Santos, who is very influential and has a base among the people, is on the same side.

[Nebot Saadi] I would answer in this way: I would tell you that without any participation by Duran in the most recent campaign in Manabi, Simon Bustamante, who was with my faction and had party support, swept Manabi. Transcending the idea of "Nebotists" or "Sixtists," Social Christians are fighting for the party. They will vote for the candidate from List 6 because if he does not win, they will not gain power, and without power, they cannot serve the people.

[LA OTRA] One hypothesis: If Abdala Bucaram and Sixto Duran-Ballen (hypothetically affiliated with another party) go on to the second ballot, whom will the PSC support?

[Nebot Saadi] No such hypothesis exists. It does not exist because the PSC will be on the second ballot. That is the only hypothesis we accept. Furthermore, Duran-Ballen has said he is resigning to withdraw from political life definitively. A man of such respect cannot change horses at this point in his life.

[LA OTRA] I continue to speculate: Would Duran-Ballen not be a dangerous candidate for you?

[Nebot Saadi] We are going to win the elections. Do all the speculating you want, but you had better bet on the Social Christian candidate and another one, terrestrial or extraterrestrial, on the second ballot. Any speculation about the opposite is out of place. Have you not seen how worried Bucaram, Vera, Mahuad, Dr. Zavala, and economist Verduga, the premier, are about the Social Christians?

Nebot Saadi maintains that his party has been "the only opposition" to the government since 10 August 1988. He says the people, cheated by this regime, know who has fought hunger, thirst, and poverty. He claims the opposition banner for the PSC. In this part of the dialogue, I asked him:

[LA OTRA] Why do you deny space to the PRE [Ecuadoran Roldosist Party], which does have support, in the political opposition?

[Nebot Saadi] Well, they can claim to have support, but the people know who is the real opposition and this is proved by deeds, by affirmative action in the streets, willingness to risk one's own skin. That business about the PRE is a well-kept secret because the people know nothing about it!

[LA OTRA] You don't think Abdala Bucaram will be on the second ballot?

[Nebot Saadi] Well, politics changes by the day, but so far, that seems to be the case.

[LA OTRA] And how will you manage not to have the vote split in Guayas? How will you manage to avoid reaching extreme levels of virulence in the campaign?

[Nebot Saadi] I will proceed as I have always done. There is no reason for us to have a full-scale war, but if, in order for the people to have housing, work, security, and public works, we have to wage out-all war, then all-out war it will be. That is why I do not believe in a "phoney" peace or fake caution because there can be no caution or real peace unless it is based on the political and economic freedom of governments and human beings. And gentlemen, if we have to wage war to make peace, then war is what we shall have!

[LA OTRA] You have said you are sure of victory, but so far you have never beaten Bucaram because you have never met. Furthermore, he has said that when the PSC won in Guayas, you competed with the "alternates" but that now it will be a battle with the "real candidates."

[Nebot Saadi] I will respond to him on the day after the 1992 elections. Both the past and the present make me sure we will win power.

[LA OTRA] How many times a year would you travel abroad if you were president?

[Nebot Saadi] As little as possible because I do not think they elect someone president so he can be an "international Peter Pan!" Furthermore, those trips do the country no good. However, I would travel when necessary, as little as possible, but when necessary.

Nebot is for restoring the independents' right to participate actively in elections. He has not been proclaimed as the PSC's presidential candidate, but it became more than just a firm possibility when Sixto Duran-Ballen, his only rival, withdrew from the arena. Nebot does not accept this, out of modesty, I believe, although it may also have to do with the fact that, strategically speaking, the circumstances have not existed that were valid when Duran-Ballen was in the fight. Now there is no hurry in the Social Christian camp. Work is already feverishly under way to consolidate the rank and file. Nebot is now the second candidate for the presidency. We said goodbye after talking for an hour. He remarked to me that in the "closed polls," he is in the 10-percent bracket in Quito and thinks he only needs a reasonable number of votes there to win in 1992 because his main base of support is along the coast. For Nebot as well as for Abdala Bucaram, there are never enough hours in the day.

The "heir to the throne," a label he does not like, is in the race.

"Was Nebot made by Leon?" I finally asked him, to which he answered:

"Absolutely not! Nebot belongs only to Nebot!"

[Box, p 19]

What To Do Once in Power

Jaime Nebot sketches the main lines of his political philosophy, which he will put into practice if he wins power.

We want a small but strong government, a noninterventionist, nonentrepreneurial government, but one that reserves for itself all the authority that emanates from the law and uses it without excess.

The government must undergo thorough reform: politically, restoring independents' right to elect and be elected; jurisdictionally, making the administration of justice flexible and depoliticized; and administratively, by decentralizing the government so that in the 21 provinces there will be public offices with sufficient money and decisionmaking ability to resolve at least the most basic problems and "deregulate" the government because we must eliminate excessive bureaucratic red tape that does nothing but absorb the time and money of Ecuadorans.

Unlike Borja, who thinks the government is everything, for us the country is everything. We mus' reduce the size of government, privatize whatever can be privatized, taking care not to affect the rights of the bureaucracy and public workers. The money, which now goes for productive spending, must go toward productive investment, growth, development, and the major infrastructures which the country needs: water, sewage systems, garbage collection, electrification, irrigation, local roads, and so on.

Our most important goal is to fight inflation. That can be done by spending less and producing more by giving the private sector motivation and confidence, setting real prices, stimulating competition, guaranteeing timely credit with easy terms, and even by subsidizing agriculture and livestock raising, which cannot get moving without that special, temporary subsidy.

[Box, p 20]

Ten Persons in 10 Words

We asked Jaime Nebot to describe ten prominent persons in the country in ten words: Rodrigo Borja: "disgovernment." Leon Febres-Cordero: government. Abdala Bucaram: unprepared. Sixto Duran-Ballen: respectability. Frank Vargas: insurrection. Elsa Bucaram: disaster. Edelberto Bonilla: collaborationist. Walter Guerrero: concealer...halfway. Alfredo Vera: criminal. Jaime Nebot: Social Christian.

Paraguay

Armed Forces Express Support for Rodriguez

PY1104224691 Asuncion NOTICIAS in Spanish 11 Apr 91 p 15

[Excerpts] The generals and admirals of our Armed Forces yesterday expressed their adherence to and support for the government leadership of President Andres Rodriguez "at this historic momment that the country is experiencing in its march toward the democracy for which we have long yearned." This happened during a ceremony during which the chief executive received a medal for having completed 45 years of service in the military.

During a ceremony held at the office of the Army commander in chief, General Rodriguez received renewed support from the upper military echelons for his leadership as head of the national government, which was described as "brilliant" by Interior Minister Division General Orlando Machuca Vargas.

In his speech, Machuca Vargas, who acted as spokesman for his comrades in arms, praised the role that Rodriguez is fulfilling at this historic moment that the country is experiencing in its march toward the democracy for which we have long yearned. [passage omitted]

The support of the upper military echelons is significant, taking into account the current political moment, and furthermore, the nearness of important events such as the internal elections of the Colorado Party and the municipal elections on 26 May.

In addition, one must not ignore the harsh criticism of Rodriguez by representatives of the official sector of the

Colorado Party executive board, who have been described as "autonomous pro-Argana faction followers" [Arganistas autonomos]. The latter actually pointed to a sort of misgovernment and called upon their followers to defend the party's autonomy in view of possible interventions by government representatives. [passage omitted]

Colorado Party Bloc Leader in Senate Named

PY1104200891 Asuncion NOTICIAS in Spanish 9 Apr 91 p 2

[Summary] Pedro Hugo Pena and Marina Aquino de Ortiz have been appointed president and vice president, respectively, of the Colorado Party bloc in the Senate.

Peru

University Students Expell Terrorists From Campus

PY1104192091 Lima RTP Television Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] In some sectors of our society, people are becoming aware of the terrorist issue and have even decided to reject it head-on. This attitude is being emphasized by the international press agencies that have reported the expelling of terrorists from the San Marcos University campus.

[Begin unidentified reporter recording] San Marcos University students expelled a group of terrorists who had infiltrated this university, which is the most important one in Peru. During the clash, the terrorists detonated five bombs, set fire to tires, and fired several shots.

The terrorists entered the university shouting: Long live the armed fight. According to students, the terrorists were trying to continue their control of the university cafeteria in order to distribute university food to their comrades in Lima jails. The students said enough of that and defended their right to administer the university cafeteria.

The clash between the students and terrorists had some spectacular moments. The police cordoned off the university campus but did not raid the premises because the rector would not allow the policemen to enter the campus. These incidents are the straw that broke the camel's back; the people have lost their patience.

In the last few hours, other subversive groups have placed bombs in public squares and burned U.S. flags. According to observers, the Peruvian Interior Ministry, which heads the National Police, has still not found a way of fighting the subversive groups despite government propaganda that the police are now fighting a tougher battle of repression against those engaged in the armed fight. [end recording]

Health Workers Return After Strike Ruled Illegal

PY1104150791 Lima RTP Television Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] Health sector activities are becoming normal again because most of the sector workers returned to their jobs yesterday when the Health Ministry declared their strike illegal.

According to Health Ministry Resolution Number 391-91, as of today the health sector strike is declared illegal. At the First Aid Department of the Loaysa Hospital, the nurses are already working normally probably fearing the measures that may be adopted against them. Once a strike is declared illegal, striking workers' salaries are reduced and all benefits are lost.

Beginning today the head of each department will control the attendance of the workers so that the required measures can be taken.

[Begin unidentified nurse recording] On the 21st day of our national and indefinite strike, the government has declared the strike illegal. We 5,000 nurses are fighting for fair salaries and for the certainty that we will receive financial help for our basic staples, and an additional 250 million intis [words indistinct] Peruvian nurses. [end recording]

Guyana

Opposition Coalition Calls For Work Stoppage

FL0904131591 Bridgetown CANA in English 1149 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] Georgetown, Guyana, April 9, CANA—The four-party opposition Patriotic Coalition for Democracy (PCD) has called a national work stoppage for Tuesday as part of an ongoing campaign for free and fair elections, and to protest the rising cost of living.

"We are hoping to bring the entire nation to a standstill as far as the demands for the question of free and fair elections and against the question of hunger," Rohan Singh, a member of the PCD's action committee, told CANA.

The PCD and other opposition parties have been staging a series of protests against the government's 1991 austerity budget. Over the past month, 17 pickets have been held across the country and there were over 14 public meetings over the last week. Also, 150,000 handbills have been printed and distributed in all three counties of Guyana, Singh said.

Singh said the PCD's call for the work stoppage, dubbed a day of rest, should be an "overwhelming" success based on the response the coalition has had to its public meetings around Guyana. The PCD has appealed to businessmen, farmers, mini-bus drivers, and the entire nation to stay at home.

"In this way, at a minimum, we are expecting that the government would reconsider its position as far as the imposition of the high cost of living is concerned and bring down some of the prices that are killing our people", the PCD official said.

Singh said the PCD was not aiming to bring down the government of President Desmond Hoyte through its current protests. That, he said, would depend on the electoral process currently being reformed for forthcoming elections expected later in the year.

Central Bank Sets New Exchange Rate for Dollar

FL0804204591 Bridgetown CANA in English 2013 GMT 8 Apr 91

[Text] Georgetown, Guyana, April 8, CANA—The Central Bank on Monday set a new weekly exchange rate of 128 Guyana dollars to one U.S. dollar, but currency dealers at the free market cambios were trading one U.S. dollar for 126 Guyana dollars. With dealers citing falling demand for the U.S. dollar as the reason for the lower cambio rate, the official rate maintained a stronger position for the second straight week.

For several years, the free market rate had outstripped the official rate. Last week, the official exchange rate was 127.25 Guyana dollars to the greenback. The cambio rate of 126 Guyana dollars to the U.S. has held steady for nearly two weeks. The rate soared in initial reaction to a February 20 announcement that the official exchange rate was being devalued to bring it on a par with the free market.

Bauxite Unions To Take Case to President Hoyte

FL1004235091 Bridgetown CANA in English 2142 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Text] Georgetown, Guyana, April 10, CANA—Two bauxite unions in Guyana have abandoned talks with top industry officials and say they are taking their case for a wage hike directly to President Desmond Hoyte. The Guyana Mine Workers Union (GMWU) and the Guyana Supervisors Bauxite Union (GSBU) bypassed top management officials from the Guyana Mining Enterprise (Guymine) after a stalemate in wage talks developed. The two unions will now take up their case with Hoyte, who has cabinet responsibility for bauxite affairs.

Recent meetings between the two sides failed to reach an agreement as Guymine has offered a 38 per cent hike, which was immediately rejected by the two unions. The unions want more than 50 per cent. The two sides are also at loggerheads over the simultaneous payment of across-the-board merit increments for the last two years. Guymine wants to pay the increments in three instalments but the unions are demanding that the entire sum be paid in one instalment.

Suriname

Carter Institute Willing To Advise Government

FL1004140091 Bonaire Trans World Radio in English 1130 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Text] The Carter Institute of Atlanta, Georgia, is offering to help Suriname in its transition from military to civilian rule. Belize Prime Minister George Price, deputy director of the Carter Institute, led a team from the institute on a weekend visit to Suriname.

OAS Observer Mission Expects Fair Elections

FL1104164191 Bridgetown CANA in English 1602 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] Washington, April 11, CANA—The coordinator of an election observer mission sent to Suriname by the Organisation of American States (OAS) expects fair elections on May 25 when Surinamese go to the polls to return the country to democracy after a military coup last December 24.

"We are there because we hope the results of the election will be respected," Edgardo Reis said in a United States Information Agency (USIA) interview here. "If we thought the contrary, we would not be there. We believe every actor in the election in good faith."

Reis, a Brazilian, noted that the OAS had condemned the coup that paired Suriname with Cuba as the only countries in the hemisphere without an elected civilian government.

In that framework, he said, the interim Surinamese Government invited the OAS to observe the electoral process to return the country to democracy. Suriname has a very effective electoral system in place, Reis said, although logistics are difficult in the interior of the country. Access there is by plane and then canoe, he said.

Before he visited the interior, Reis said he did not understand that in spite of their isolation, people there follow political developments closely and know what is going on. Election officials are still working out the best way to get out the vote in the interior, he said, debating the idea of having floating polling stations go from village to village rather than forcing people to paddle two hours to vote.

Reis said the OAS group—which incorporates a Caribbean Community (Caricom) delegation—started work at the beginning of March. Their work, he said, is to assure "a very fair, just, and transparent election."

"We are not there to declare the winner and we are not there to tell them how to run the election," Reis added. "They know how to do it, although we can help and assist them." As election day nears, Reis said, his mission will grow to about 40 official observers and 60 support personnel, working in all 10 electoral districts.

The observers inspected voter registration lists and the registration of political parties and candidates. The candidates' registration deadline is April 17, Reis said, but he added that some candidates are already holding meetings and campaigning.

Reis said his people would stay in contact with all the political organisations, electoral and government officials, and follow media coverage. They will also note complaints, and the actions taken in response by the authorities, and will report any irregularities to the officials responsible.

The OAS' work, Reis emphasized, will not end on election day.

"We are going to be present there until the new National Assembly is sworn in," he said, "and even until a new president is elected" (by the new National Assembly).

Suriname is Reis' fifth OAS observer mission, following previous ones in Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Honduras, and the Dominican Republic. He noted that another OAS mission will be in Paraguay at the same time for its election May 26.

"Each country is different," he said, pointing out that in Nicaragua, observers participated in everything, including the structure of the electoral process, while in Suriname, "all the political parties told me they consider (it) a very fair electoral process."

Assembly Extends Deadline for Nominations

PY120403449] Paramaribo International Service in English 1728 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] The National Assembly yesterday approved a draft law for the [word indistinct] election law for the general elections. The [word indistinct] makes provisions for, among others, the extension of the time for the nomination of candidates until tomorrow in four districts. The draft law also (?provides) for the installation of mobile voting centers, as, according to Internal Affairs Minister [name indistinct] are to facilitate voters at the hospitals, senior citizens, homes and centers for the handicapped.

Four other articles in the draft law on the arguments of the adverts of candidates and the power of the government (?to regulate) issues in [word indistinct] were withdrawn by the government before the voting on the draft law took place. The assembly has objected against (?these) articles. Opposition Assembly members of the PALU [Progressive Workers' and Farm Labourers' Union] and (?SPA) voted against the draft law. They don't think it is fair for the nomination of candidates in the four districts to be extended while only the New Front has complained against the prohibition of free access for these areas. Other parties have worked to death to meet the nomination deadlines that opposition member (?Von Free Fed) who further added that the rest of the draft law needs an extension of the general and free character of the elections.

The draft law as a whole was approved by 26 votes to one while three assembly members voted against the article which changes the date for the nomination of candidates.

It seems that there is a difference of opinion within the National Assembly whether a meeting should be called or not to discuss the policies of the interim cabinet. Opposition members have accused the front which has the majority in the assembly of [words indistinct] honesty base because it doesn't want irregularities of the government in the (?pharisaism) to be exposed.

The front government was ousted after three years through a military takeover but still has 40 of the 51 seats in the assembly. Front assembly member, (Noor Mohamed) [word indistinct] of the opinion that the interim cabinet staff is to only organize elections. The front doesn't avoid dicussions but wants to prevent explanations, said the assembly member. It is still not clear when the assembly meeting requested by the government will be held. Vice President Jules Wijdenbosch has already announced that the cabinet, if necessary, will hold a meeting on the street to inform the people of all the policies being executed by the interim cabinet.